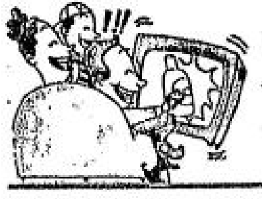
Business Friday / B2-1



Humor could be the best-selling tool in advertising

Metro / A20

Ayala Alabang businesswoman faces tax evasion charges

Across / A15

Pangasinan town vice mayor killed; entire police force sacked

News / A2

Namfrel denies rigging election tally

News / A2

Rosales top contender for CBCP president

Police rally round President amid talk of restive military

By Christine O. Avendaño and Fe Zamora

TOP OFFICIALS of the Philippine National Police led by Director General Arturo Lomibao yesterday pledged support for the leadership of President Macapagal-Arroyo in the wake of new destabilization reports against her ad-

POLICE/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

GMA hits back, says foes out to oust her unfit to rule

By Christine O. Avendaño

WITH MORE than half of Filipinos believing there were better Filipino leaders than her, President Macapagal-Arroyo said her detractors seeking to oust her were unfit to rule.

Ms Arroyo yesterday said that her detractors "can only sit down and raise controver-

GMA/ A5

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Friday, July 8, 2005 ★★ 60 pages / 7 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 210 P18 website: www.inq7.net

HAIL TO THE CHIEF: Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes (extreme left) and PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao (center) lead a delegation of the country's top guns to the Palace on Thursday to let the President know she's still their Commander in Chief.

EDWIN BACASMAS

GMA tells Cabinet: Quit

President preempts planned mass resignation

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Christian V. Esguerra

IN AN APPARENT move to preempt desertion by her key Cabinet members, President Macapagal-Arroyo last night demanded the resignation of her Cabinet to allow her to initiate constitutional amendments and declared she would not give in to demands that she step aside.

"I am not resigning my office," Ms Arroyo said in a rare address to the nation broadcast on government radio. She said to do so would "condemn any successor" to the possibility of another people power revolt and condemn the nation in the eyes of the world as "hopelessly unstable."

The President spoke amid reports that two key Cabinet ministers were set to resign within the next 48 hours and had sought to persuade religious leaders to intervene to persuade that she stand down.

Bro. Manuel de Leon, vice chair of the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP), earlier told the INQUIRER that the two secretaries who were well respected in business and the re-

GMA/ A6

Cha-cha 'exit option' for GMA, says Ramos

By Michelle V. Remo

A SWIFT revision of the Constitution to pave the way for a parliamentary form of government and new elections in May 2006 is "a graceful exit option" for President Macapagal-Arroyo, former President Fidel Ramos said yesterday.

Ramos called for Charter Change (Cha-cha) as Ms Arroyo faced calls.

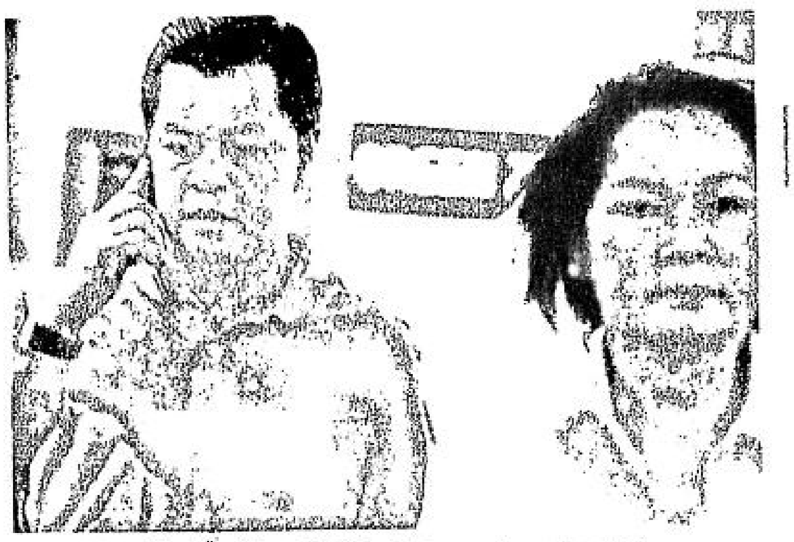
Ms Arroyo is facing growing calls for her resignation following her admission that she talked to an election official about ensuring a million-vote victory margin during the May 2004 ballot.

"My humble proposal is not for the President to resign, not for a snap election, not for a junta ... not for a military coup, not for an authoritative democracy, not for martial law, not for a communist takeover," Ramos told the Rotary Club of Manila.

"Whether legal or illegal, constitutional or unconstitutional, none of these will serve us in the long run because they are bound to fail sooner or later," he said.

Ramos said it was not advisable for Ms Arroyo to resign because the country needed a leader until the elections were held. But he said his suggestion of allowing Ms Arroyo to remain in

CHA-CHA/ A6



COMING... Vice President Noli de Castro gets a red carpet treatment upon arrival from Hong Kong on Thursday morning with wife Arlene.

ROGER MARGALLO

Noli meets Gloria, Cory, veep contenders

By Cynthia D. Balana and Nikko Dizon

VICE PRESIDENT Noli de Castro was engulfed in a swirl of very important meetings upon his arrival from Hong Kong yesterday.

The scheduled meeting with former President Corazon Aquino pushed through in the early evening at the Green Meadows residence of Aquino's daughter Ballsy Cruz.

At 7:30 p.m., De Castro met with President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Palace shortly before the latter went on air to address

NOLI/ A4

Wrong Arroyo exiled–Nene

By Norman Bordadora and Nikko Dizon

WRONG Arroyo.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday scoffed at First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo's voluntary exile, saying it was just a ploy by President Macapagal-Arroyo to stave off mounting calls for her to resign.

"The wrong Arroyo was exiled. It should be Gloria, not Mike. No wonder the President's credibility problem worsens by the day," Pimentel said a day after Ms Arroyo's

WRONG/ A6

GOING, GOING . . . Rep. Mikey Arroyo with wife Angela and their two daughters at the Centennial Airport before their departure for San Francisco on Wednesday night.

ROGER MARGALLO

'Our Lady of Amor Seco' to GMA's rescue

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Supporters of President Macapagal-Arroyo in Pampanga brought to Malacañang yesterday the miraculous image of "Our Lady of Amor Seco." It is the same patroness that former President Corazon Aquino had sought when she was faced by

OUR LADY/ A4

JOAN BONDOC

VISIONARY Romy Pabustar carries Our Lady of Amor Seco.

Terror hits London; 40 killed in blasts

LONDON—Four blasts ripped through London at rush hour early on Thursday, killing people, wounding 150 seriously and disrupting a meeting of Group of Eight leaders in Scotland in attacks Prime Minister Tony Blair called "barbaric."

British officials had yet to release the death toll, but US officials quoted their British counterparts as saying as many as 40 people were killed.

Witnesses saw the top ripped off a double-decker bus near Russell Square close to King's Cross train terminal, and packed subway trains were hit in three more apparently coordinated blasts.

"I was on the bus," said one dazed passenger. "I looked round and the seats behind me were gone." "You could see bodies on the road outside. There was smoke everywhere. It was carnage," said eyewitness Peter Gordon.

British Interior Minister Charles Clarke called the explosions "terrorist attacks", and US President George W. Bush, speaking at the G8 summit, told reporters that "the war on terror goes on."

"We will not yield to these terrorists, we will find them, we will bring them to justice." A previously unknown group, "Secret Group of al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe," claimed responsibility for the attacks.

In the confusion, the human toll of the blasts was unclear, with reports suggesting that dozens of people may have been killed. CNN reported that at least 10 people were confirmed dead at King's Cross station.

Police have so far declined to give a death toll or comment on suggestions that suicide bombers were involved.

Financial markets tumbled as the scale of the attacks became clear and Blair told reporters he would return to London from the G8 summit to oversee the emergency. He planned to return to the talks in Gleneagles later in the day.

The attacks recalled the 2004 train bombings in Madrid blamed on al Qaida and left the city's residents in shock. The Islamic Human

TERROR/ A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, JULY 8, 2005

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Text us your feedback: Inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western Luzon, Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms. SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	**Roxas**	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY ERIKA A. SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/07/08/05

Namfrel denies fudging poll tally

THE NATIONAL Citizens' Movement for Free Elections has denied claims of election fraud by information technology expert Roberto Verzola who has been presenting his study of the 2004 elections in various public forums and media recently.

Namfrel national chair Jose Concepcion Jr. also discredited Verzola's claim that his study, which reviewed the unofficial tally of Namfrel, was a project of the Catholic Church.

In his study, titled "The true results of the 2004 presidential elections based on Namfrel tally," Verzola claimed that there was "massive cheating" in the elections to secure President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory or give her a commanding lead.

He said Ms Arroyo could not have won by 1.1 million votes as the Congress count said or by 681,000, as claimed by the Namfrel in its final report of its election tally.

Manipulation

Verzola also alleged that the Namfrel tally showed "clear signs of manipulation through selective tabulation."

In his statement, Concepcion denied that the Namfrel count had been manipulated or selectively tabulated.

He said Namfrel results were based on a tally of election returns "filled out at the precinct by schoolteachers and picked up by Namfrel volunteers."

"These election returns are reports of actual ballot counting taken immediately after the polls close," he said.

Concepcion also said that contrary to Verzola's allegation that Namfrel had not responded to his findings, the group had answered the claims that he had been making since last year and "answered them all."

"We have spent much [time] in conversations with Mr. Verzola at the Namfrel Quick Count Center where he was a frequent visitor," Concepcion said.

He also said that Verzola had falsely claimed that his study was a project of the Coalition for Hope under Ricardo Cardinal Vidal of Cebu, Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales and Archbishop Fernando Capalla of Davao.

Not authorized

However, he said Namfrel had "learned that the Cardinal and the archbishops had not authorized anybody to act on their behalf with respect to the elections nor Namfrel operations."

As for Verzola's claim that the President did not win by 1.1 million votes, Concepcion said the 1.1 million vote margin referred to in the Congress count was based on a different set of documents known as the certificates of canvass, which cover 100 percent of the votes cast.

"Because they have been known to contain errors or to be tampered in past elections, Namfrel's tally does not include data from these documents," he said.

He stressed that what Namfrel holds and based its tally on were the election tally result sheets which were exact copies of the returns held by various political parties.

He noted that when Namfrel ended its operation and issued its final report in June 2004, "no political party refuted these results with their own election returns."

Christine A. Gaylican

Rosales tipped as next CBCP head

By Christian V. Esguerra

THOUGH he has expressed disinterest in the position in the past, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales is quietly emerging as the top contender for the leadership of the Catholic Church in the Philippines.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz, of the Lingayen-Dagupan diocese, said Rosales was a leading candidate, together with Archbishop Angel Lagdameo (Jaro, Iloilo), for president of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, the official organization of the Catholic hierarchy in the country.

Church insiders wonder whether the low-profile Rosales would accept a nomination when the bishops elect their new leader at the CBCP's 91st plenary council meeting tomorrow.

Rosales has twice declined to lead the 120-strong CBCP, once when he was vice president of the body in the late 1990s.

He said at the time that he wanted to concentrate on his duties as Archdiocese of Lipa.

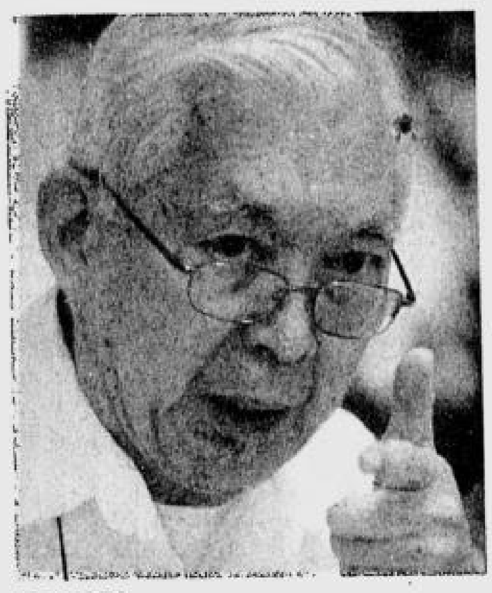
'Progressive' bishop

By tradition, CBCP vice presidents go on to become presidents of the body, a practice that would tend to favor the younger Lagdameo, 64, known to be a "progressive."

But insiders have taken as a sign that the 72-year-old Rosales might be open to accepting the job this time with his decision to move to the See of Manila, after replacing the late Jaime Cardinal Sin in 2003.

"He's nearing retirement and he already has a retirement home in Lipa. But how come he agreed to still move to Manila?" said a Church official.

If elected, Rosales will be following in the footsteps of the late Archbishop Gabriel Reyes, Rufino Cardinal Santos and Sin who all headed the CBCP while serving as Manila archbishop.



ROSALES

As to what the character of the Church would be with Rosales at the helm of the CBCP was another matter, a senior Church leader said.

"You will never know it until he's there," he said.

"The CBCP president will always be challenged by the circumstances of the time. Today is a very difficult period in our country," the Church leader said.

Some clerics have observed that the CBCP would need strong leadership at this time, with President Macapagal-Arroyo's credibility under question and the political situation so volatile.

The CBCP has been criticized for not staking out its position in the political crisis roiling the country triggered by Ms Arroyo's alleged rigging of the 2004 presidential election.

The outgoing CBCP president, Archbishop Fernando Capalla of Davao, has been strangely quiet about the issue and observers believe his silence was a reflection of his reported closeness to the President.

With Capalla failing to articulate a position, other bishops have been speaking out individually on the issue, to the detriment of the organization, the Church leader said.

One voice

"It's better if you have only one voice. Even if you commit a mistake, you'll just be clarifying on one position," he said.

Bishops Deogracias Iñiguez, Antonio Tobias and Julio Xavier Labayen have demanded that the President resign, saying she had lost her "moral and legal authority" to govern.

Others like Lagdameo and Balanga Bishop Socrates Villegas have called for sobriety while insisting that the matter be resolved but through constitutional means.

Church observers say Rosales has somehow stamped his leadership on a "divided" Church when he issued a pastoral letter last Friday.

Read during Mass throughout the country last Sunday, Rosales' statement supported the call for a constitutional resolution of the crisis while reminding the President that forgiveness also required accountability.

Rosales, who speaks for all Metro Manila bishops, apparently was not content with Ms Arroyo's admission that she had phoned an election official and apologized for it 22 days after the issue first surfaced.

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Another forfeiture case filed vs Garcia

By Nelson F. Flores

A SECOND forfeiture case has been filed by the Office of the Ombudsman against former Armed Forces comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia and his family in yet another bid to recover more than P202 million in alleged ill-gotten wealth.

The new forfeiture case brings to more than P345 million the total worth of assets and properties being sought by the government from the Garcias.

The 18-page complaint was filed Tuesday with the Sandiganbayan by the Ombudsman. It included the findings by the Anti-Money Laundering Council to bolster the government's claims that the retired general and his family's wealth were illegally amassed.

The AMLC said Garcia's wife Clarita and sons Ian Carl, Paolo and Timothy held 78 other bank deposits and investment accounts that were not mentioned in the forfeiture case filed by the government last year.

New fuel price increase looms

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH world oil prices again soaring to all-time highs, local fuel prices are expected to increase by around 50 centavos a liter in the coming days.

Energy Undersecretary Peter Anthony Abaya said this was highly possible as local oil firms could soon make their retail prices reflect the changes in the world market.

"The jump in international prices is huge, but we expect just small adjustments, typically around 50 centavos a liter," he said in a briefing yesterday.

The regional benchmark Dubai crude hit a record high of $54.67 a barrel Wednesday, pushing the July average up to $53.32 a barrel from the June average of $51.08 a barrel.

All-time high

The price of diesel based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products likewise soared to a historic high of $75.28 a barrel, also last Wednesday, pegging the July average at $74.17 a barrel, up by almost $3 from the average of $71.32 a barrel posted last month.

MOPS-based unleaded gasoline is now also pushing toward its all-time high price of $65.58 a barrel as it surged to $64.25 a barrel on Wednesday. This boosted the July 1-6 average to $62.99 a barrel from only $59.65 a barrel in June.

Even the West Texas Intermediate crude benchmark of the US reached a record high of $61.13 a liter on Wednesday.

"If an oil firm hikes prices at this point, that will be reasonable as world prices are really going up. The upsurge is really strong," Abaya said.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. general manager for external affairs Roberto Kanapi said in a separate interview that a price hike was a very real possibility right now.

"Oil prices continue to be very high. We're looking at our prices [to see] if there's a need for an adjustment," Kanapi said.

Exclusive of VAT

Oil firms last hiked their gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices by 50 centavos a liter in the last week of June, a few days before the expanded value-added tax law was scheduled to take effect but which the Supreme Court stopped by way of a temporary restraining order.

Since the start of the year, gasoline prices have risen 11 times by a total of P5.85 a liter, while diesel fuel prices have gone up 12 times by a total of P6.05 a liter.

Premium unleaded gasoline now retails at between P30.05 and P31.80 a liter, diesel at between P27.85 and P29.19 a liter and kerosene at between P29.45 and P30.51 a liter.

Hagedorn is anti-jueteng czar

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo announced yesterday her designation of Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn as the government's anti-jueteng czar.

She said Hagedorn could start work immediately and need not take an oath of office as the fight against "jueteng" was already part of his job as a local official.

Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao and Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, who were in Malacañang when the President made the announcement, pledged to work with Hagedorn.

Reyes told reporters Hagedorn's appointment was most welcome because the mayor was "famous" for stopping the illegal numbers game in his city.

"We will make use of his expertise, get his advice on how we could address the problem of jueteng," Reyes said.

"We can work together, together with the secretary (Reyes)," Lomibao told reporters, referring to Hagedorn.

Hagedorn, however, could not be reached for comment yesterday. It is not known if he has accepted the appointment.

Ship with 238 aboard on fire off Zambo town

By Leila B. Salaverria

AN INTERISLAND passenger ship with over 200 people on board caught fire at noon yesterday while it was on its way to Zamboanga City, according to the Philippine Coast Guard.

The 10,700-ton M/V Princess of the World, which is owned by Sulpicio Lines, caught fire in the vicinity of Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, at 12:05 p.m.

It was carrying 118 passengers, 115 crew members and five sea marshals, said PCG spokesperson Lt. Armand Balilo, quoting figures he received from Sulpicio Lines and from the PCG office in Iloilo.

Rescue vessels from various agencies were dispatched to the area to pick up the passengers who had boarded life rafts.

As of 4:30 p.m., the PCG had not received any reports of casualties or missing persons.

Balilo said the ship left Iloilo at 8 p.m. Wednesday bound for Zamboanga City and General Santos City.

Quoting reports from Zamboanga, he said the fire was believed to have started in the ship's engine room.

"Our biggest worry is that the life rafts may drift off and we may lose track of the passengers. That is why we are scrambling to send rescue vessels to the area," Balilo said.

By 3:30 p.m., the PCG's BRP Davao del Norte had reached the area and was picking up passengers, Balilo said.

The PCG also sent the BRP Pampanga from Cebu to help put out the blaze since the boat has firefighting capabilities.

Balilo said fishermen in the area also came to the passengers' rescue and were expected to bring them to Siocon.

Sulpicio Lines sent another of its ships, the Prince of the Caribbean, to pick up the passengers.

PCG commandant Vice Admiral Arthur Gosingan also called on the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Air Force for assistance. Balilo said United States light sea craft that were in Zamboanga City were reported to be on their way to the area.

The M/V Princess of the World has a gross tonnage of 10,709.39 and can carry 1,994 passengers, according to the Sulpicio Lines website (www.sulpicio-lines.com).

It has a basketball court, beauty salon, disco, cafeteria, gym, gift shop, playground and karaoke bar.

The last big fire to hit a passenger vessel occurred on Feb. 27, 2004, when the SuperFerry 14 was firebombed.

Over 100 people died or went missing after an explosion and then a fire swept through the 10,000-ton ship, causing it to partially sink. The ship had been carrying over 800 people at the time.

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GMA congratulates RP artist for award-winning portrait

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday congratulated Filipino painter Romulo Galicano, for winning the prestigious Draper Grand Prize by the Portrait Society of America in Washington D.C. last May.

Galicano presented to the President a compilation of his paintings and a photo of the winning 30" x 40" oil painting, titled "Eddie," at the Music Museum Room in Malacañang.

A resident of Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Galicano is the second Filipino who won the contest. The late painter Juan Luna, whose "Spolarium" was painted 123 years ago, also won recognition.

Galicano bested 2,000 other painters from all over the world in this year's Portrait Society of America awards.

He was also awarded a Certificate of Merit by the Portrait Society of America in 2004.

"This is one good news at this time... Filipino artists are really talented and at par with international artists," National Commission on Culture and Arts chairman Ambeth Ocampo said in an interview.

"Eddie," the man in the portrait is "a client," Galicano said.

Erap: I'll take presidency, if...

By Nelson F. Flores

FORMER President Joseph Estrada yesterday said he would reassume the presidency if the people demand it, even as he stressed that he was no longer interested in pursuing the lost years of his presidency.

Speaking through his mouthpiece, former Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, Estrada, who is on trial for plunder in the Sandiganbayan, said he would support whoever succeeds President Macapagal-Arroyo if she resigns or is removed from power.

"I categorically state that I am not after regaining the lost, stolen years of my legitimate presidency. I will unequivocally support whoever is destined to be the new and popular leader of our people. I believe that the circumstances and events unfolding before us at present will define who this new leader will be," Estrada said.

At the same time, he reiterated his support for actress Susan Roces, the widow of his late best friend Fernando Poe Jr., describing her as the "new symbol and inspiration" of the masses.

Rule of law

Poe ran for president last year but lost to Ms Arroyo.

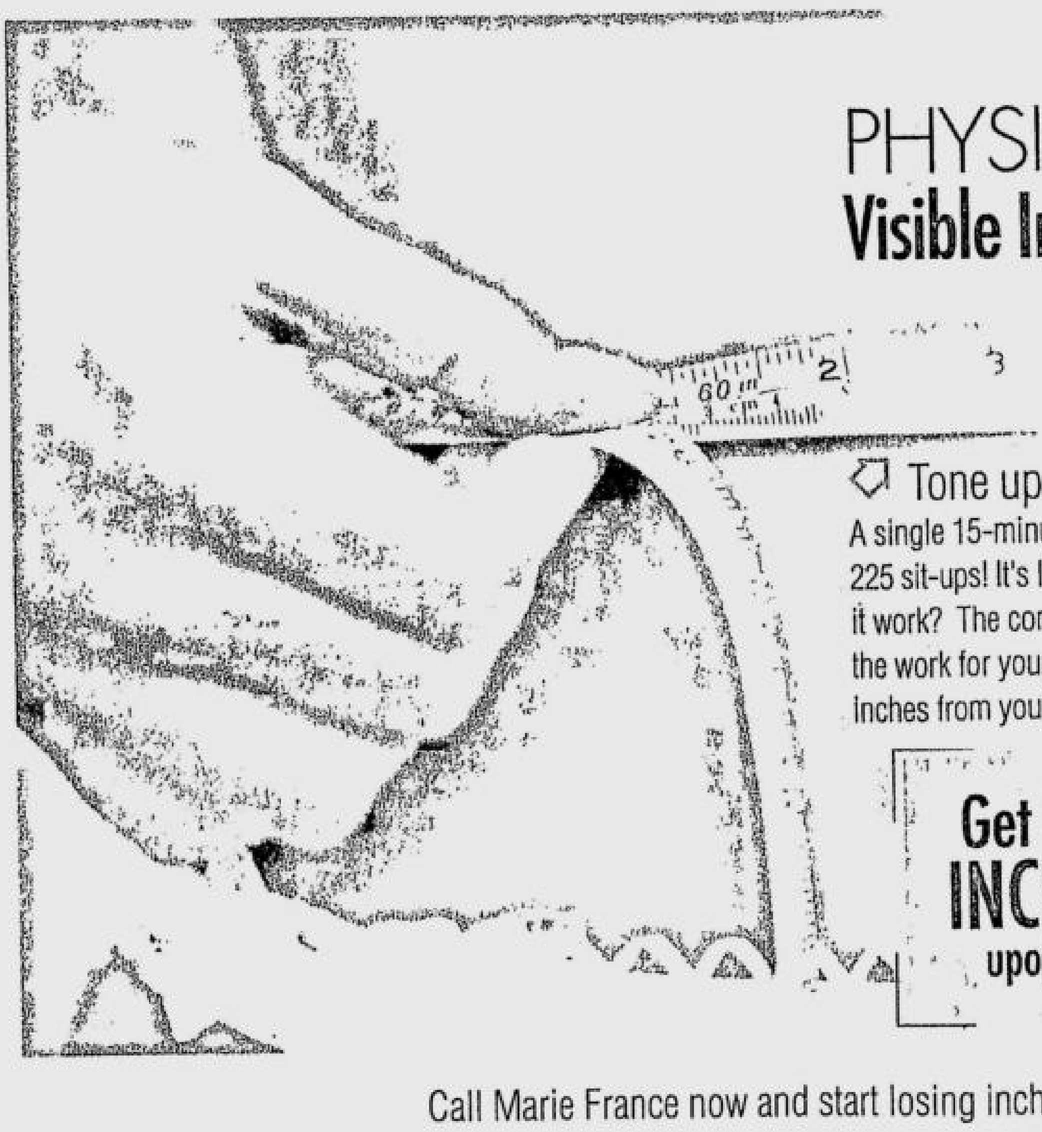
Estrada noted the "irony that Ms Arroyo and her allies are calling for the observance of the rule of law when they were the ones who broke it when they ousted me from power in 2001."

Estrada said it was Ms Arroyo and her supporters who turned their backs on the Constitution when they "demonized me, demanded my ouster and convicted me in the streets."

"Ms Arroyo is now reaping what she has sown," Estrada said.

He noted that during his presidency, he allowed protests in the streets and he submitted himself to impeachment proceedings in deference to the Constitution.

"*Walang dinidisperse, walang pinagbabawalang magsalita nuong nakaupo ako* (Nobody was dispersed or prevented from speaking out when I was in power)," he said.



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GOVERNORS for GMA: About 60 of them wearing red, white and blue armbands link arms to signify their unwavering solidarity with the President.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Pro-GMA solons want Garci to name all callers

By Michael Lim Ubac and Philip C. Tubeza

IN AN APPARENT move to ease pressure on President Macapagal-Arroyo in the midst of allegations she rigged last year's election, administration lawmakers yesterday demanded that Virgilio Garcillano name all the candidates he spoke with during the balloting.

In exclusive interviews with the INQUIRER in the past two days, former Election Commissioner Garcillano named at least seven politicians he talked with in the course of the vote. He said they did not ask for favors but merely expressed concern over possible fraud.

He also admitted he talked with Ms Arroyo in a telephone conversation that was tapped but denied allegations he conspired with her to fix the polling. He said the wiretap was doctored.

Ms Arroyo has confirmed hers is the voice in the wiretap but said she simply wanted to protect her votes.

At the resumption of a joint investigation, five House committees agreed to subpoena the 68-year-old Garcillano and directed the nation's law enforcement agencies to bring him before the inquiry.

Garcillano had earlier denied he was the man in the wiretap. He had disappeared from public view until the telephone interview with the INQUIRER.

In a news conference, administration Representatives Prospero Pichay, Marcelino Libanan, Rodolfo Antonino and Anthony Miranda told reporters that Garcillano should appear before the inquiry and identify all the opposition personalities he talked with in the last election.

Libanan said allies of Ms Arroyo would want the beleaguered ex-poll official to come out and "clear things out," while Antonino said the majority "want to get to the bottom of the truth."

Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte said it was possible "there were other opposition candidates who might have talked to (Garcillano) during the election."

Minority lawmakers said that by announcing he also talked with the opposition during the balloting, Garcillano was attempting to deflect attention from Ms Arroyo and defuse calls for her to resign.

"If we continue to let him get away ... and he will keep on dropping names," said opposition Rep. Jacinto Paras. He said Garcillano had opted to talk to the public through the INQUIRER instead of "facing the music" by attending the congressional inquiry.

All about rigging

Akbayan party-list Rep. Etta Rosales, one of the politicians Garcillano said he talked with, dared him to "come out into the open and explain himself before the congressional inquiry to clear those he has maliciously implicated to justify his collusion with GMA."

"It is about specifically rigging the election to favor her. This is the core of the political turmoil surrounding GMA now," said Rosales.

The lawmaker said she was cited by Garcillano in "his attempt to make it appear that the very serious implications of his alleged wiretapped conversations with the President are nothing out of the ordinary."

Rosales said she had been making representations with the Commission on Elections as vice chair of the House committee on suffrage and part of "our ongoing struggle to overhaul the electoral system."

Former Sen. Francisco Tatad appeared before the joint committee following lawyer Alan Paguia's admission that Tatad was the source of the two audio cassettes, which he had submitted to the inquiry and which were played in open session last Tuesday.

Tatad repeated earlier statements outside the hearing he had received the tapes by mail and could not identify their source. He added he had tried to have a US firm to authenticate it.

Director Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation also told the inquiry yesterday that the NBI had procured wiretapping equipment. But he said the P25 million GSM cell phone interceptor was defective and had not been used.

Noli meets Gloria, Cory, veep contenders

From page A1

the nation *(See story on this page.)*

Earlier in the day, political allies of De Castro met in the home of Sen. Joker Arroyo to discuss his succession in the event President Macapagal-Arroyo is forced to resign, a highly placed source told the INQUIRER.

Defensor present

Surprisingly, the discussion was attended by Environment Secretary Mike Defensor, one of the President's closest associates. The source told the INQUIRER that Defensor had been designated to report to the President the results of the meeting.

The meeting took place at the Arroyo home in Dasmariñas Village, Makati, shortly upon De Castro's arrival from Hong Kong, where he spent his 56th birthday with his family.

Also present in the meeting was Sen. Manuel Villar. Both Arroyo and Villar are part of the Senate's closely knit Wednesday Club.

According to the source, various names had been floated to be De Castro's vice president in case he finally took over the presidency.

Among them were Senate President Franklin Drilon, Sen. Mar Roxas, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, Oscar Orbos and Villar himself. Several proadministration congressmen, on the other hand, were pushing for Speaker Jose de Venecia.

VIP's arrival

De Castro's arrival from Hong Kong appeared to herald the increasing importance accorded the second highest official of the land. Security escorts from the Presidential Security Group (PSG) made sure he would not be interviewed.

De Castro and his wife, Arlene, arrived on board Cathay Pacific CX 901, which landed at the Naia at 12:38pm.

They were met at Gate 7 by at least six PSG men and airport authority security chief, retired Brig. Gen. Angel Atutubo.

After emerging from the tube, the group went on counter flow, an airport jargon that means VIP passengers use a route different from ordinary passengers.

The De Castro entourage passed through the pre-departure area and went up the departure concourse.

Surrounded by his security aides, De Castro spoke to someone on a mobile phone as they walked toward an elevator to take them to the ramp, where his vehicles were waiting.

After the meeting at the Arroyo residence, De Castro was "*masaya at comportable na*" (happy and satisfied), according to the INQUIRER source.

Emerging united opposition

The Dasmariñas meeting was prompted by the latest development on the opposition front, according to the source.

De Castro's allies were worried about a reportedly emerging united opposition with either actress Susan Roces or Lacson at the forefront of the forces out to remove Ms Arroyo.

The same source also said that Roces and Lacson met Wednesday night when Roces allegedly told the senator to put the past behind them.

The source said the two opposition stalwarts discussed the possibility of "adopting" De Castro in case the latter breaks away from Malacañang.

Only in the Philippines

De Castro was TV news anchor with relatively little political experience when President Arroyo chose him to be her running mate in last year's presidential election.

Now, in a twist of fate that can only happen in the Philippines, the political newcomer picked to put some personality on the ticket to balance Ms Arroyo's dour demeanour, could become president if his boss bows to mounting pressure to quit.

In a survey published on Wednesday, the Vice President was chosen by 30 percent of 1,200 Filipinos polled by Pulse Asia as the best alternative to Ms Arroyo to lead the country.

"I am pleased that the people have reaffirmed their trust and confidence in (my) competence as a national leader," De Castro said in a statement on Wednesday.

Ms Arroyo faces rising pressure to quit over allegations she stole last year's presidential election and that her family took kickbacks from illegal gambling.

Team player

Described by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye as a "team player," De Castro has said he would never initiate or support moves to remove the President from office—but neither would he block them.

Before being thrust into Philippine politics, he was the anchor of top-rated news programs, including "TV Patrol" and "Magandang Gabi Bayan," giving him a platform from which to launch his political career in 2001.

In the Senate elections that year, De Castro polled the highest number of votes.

Married twice, he has one child from a first marriage that ended in divorce, and two with his current wife, a former television news executive.

Palliative solution

"De Castro could be a palliative solution," said Earl Parreno of the Institute for Political and Electoral Reforms.

"He also faces an election protest, so you can expect the opposition to continue making troubles."

Parreno said he doubted whether De Castro had the competence and experience of past leaders, including former President Joseph Estrada, who

was town mayor for 20 years, a senator and vice president before taking the top job.

"De Castro's case makes our argument stronger to overhaul the country's political system," he said. "We should never choose a vice president only as a spare tire." *With a report from Reuters*

Police rally round GMA amid talks of restive military

From page A1

ministration.

"The situation now calls for everybody to become solid, to become united, to work together so that we can proceed and help the President in her programs for the administration," said Lomibao, who presented to the President a manifesto of support of the police organization in Malacañang.

"We have come here to renew our pledge of loyalty in the face of so many reports that... there [is] recruitment going on... [in] the PNP and the military," he told reporters.

According to analysts, Ms Arroyo may be starting to lose vital support within the Armed Forces and the influential Roman Catholic Church as she battles vote-rigging allegations.

Now, more than a month into the scandal, cracks have started to appear in institutional backing for Ms Arroyo, who has apologized for phoning a top election official in the 2004 presidential poll but denied stealing the election.

The President accepted the PNP manifesto from Lomibao, who was accompanied by Deputy Director General Avelino Razon, chief of the PNP directorial staff; Director Vidal Querol, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, and Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, PNP spokesperson.

She thanked the police officials and urged them "to carry on" with their work.

Solidarity, cracks

"We have come this morning in solidarity with the President and we also pledge loyalty to the Constitution, to the administration and to the rule of law," Lomibao said.

Key leaders and officers of the PNP at its national headquarters signed the manifesto, he said. Among the President's supporters, he said, were active and retired officers of the PNP, as well as the federation of PNP-accredited nongovernment organizations.

Other PNP leaders would be giving their manifesto of support "in the days to come," Lomibao said.

Top military leaders have so far stayed publicly loyal to Ms Arroyo, who survived a mutiny by several hundred soldiers who seized the Oakwood Premier building in the financial district of Makati in July 2003 to protest alleged government corruption.

But last week, cracks started to appear when the brass sacked the operations chief of an elite Army regiment for pamphleteering against Ms Arroyo.

Adding to the President's woes, a group of generals and lower-ranking officers threatened a mass resignation over claims that Ms Arroyo had used military resources in poll cheating.

'Decisive blow'

A withdrawal of support by the military would be "decisive" in toppling her administration, but the military, at the moment, appeared to be still waiting for the situation to "clear up," according to political analysts.

Soldiers, priests and intellectuals have been crucial in toppling President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and President Joseph Estrada in 2001, while coup attempts lacking support from these powerful factions have failed.

According to the analysts, the pivotal roles played by the military were likely to happen again.

"The Arroyo fortress has become impenetrable such that it could only be attacked from the inside. Breaks from allies would weaken her, but a withdrawal of support from the military would deal the decisive blow," said Antonio Gatmaitan, president of the Political Economy Applied Research Foundation.

Retired Commodore Rex Robles shared the view, but he said the military, at the moment, seemed to be weighing the situation carefully since an alleged wiretapped conversation between the President and an election official, suggesting a plan to rig the May elections, was made public a month ago.

Young officers

"It appears that the situation has not yet clarified enough for the military to jump into the fray," Robles, who was one of the leaders of the military faction that broke away from Marcos in 1986, told the INQUIRER.

But Robles believed that the military, especially the young officers, were "ready to move." He said the "underground military," comprising young officers who were part of the 2003 Oakwood mutiny but were not "discovered," had been consistently "serious in rejecting the present leadership."

From within

"The breach has to come from within, and that's the beginning of the end," Gatmaitan pointed out. He said that "suspicion and distrust" from Ms Arroyo's allies in the Cabinet, business, Church and civil society would also "weaken the presidency," but the final cut would have to come from the military.

Members of the Presidential Security Group (PSG) were in full battle gear yesterday as they patrolled the Palace grounds in anticipation of big antigovernment rallies in Metro Manila.

PSG chief Brig. Gen. Delfin Bangit told reporters that although his men were on red alert, "there is nothing to worry about because we want to require our personnel to be 100 percent in their posts."

Rumors

Despite the display of heavy firepower, Bangit said "everything was normal except for the security check at Malacañang's entry gates."

Bangit stressed that the PSG had not recommended restricting the movements of the President despite increasing political tension.

"Her [provincial trips] still depend on the appointments secretary. As soon as we receive some indications of trips outside Manila, only then will we assess the situation," Bangit said.

Bangit also noted rumors of a plot to assassinate the President. "We can see the kind of enemy we have. They will resort to anything out of desperation. But we will not allow these things to happen and we will use every resources of the PSG and the Armed Forces to protect the President." ***With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., AP and AFP***

'Our Lady of Amor Seco' to GMA's rescue

From page A1

at least six coup attempts during her term.

Thorny grasses (amor seco) and tiny floral buds had appeared around the face of the image almost 20 years ago, hence, the image's name.

Candaba Mayor Jerry Pelayo said a devotee, Romeo Pabustan, would lead the pilgrimage of Kapampangans to Malacañang which would be highlighted by the celebration of Holy Mass.

Aurora Aquino's advice

Pelayo, citing his conversation with the President on Tuesday, said Ms Arroyo had agreed to the plan after learning that Aquino, on the advice of her late mother-in-law Dona Aurora Aquino, had once sought the intercession of Our Lady of Amor Seco in 1987.

That year, Aquino was plagued by the first of a series of attempts to overthrow her administration. Aquino's prayers for peace and unity were answered after 15 days, Pelayo said.

The original image of Our Lady of Amor Seco, which is about four feet tall, is kept at the Our Lady of Fatima School owned by Lory Toledano-Lee, who began the devotion. The school is in Villa Victoria on Jesus Lazatin Boulevard in this city.

Miracles

Devotees had flocked to the image and attributed miracles to the virgin. The miracles, however, had not been verified.

The image joins the procession during the annual feast of the Virgin De los Remedios, the patroness of Pampanga.

Catholic families have opened their homes to the smaller image of Our Lady of Amor Seco, adopting it for a week for rosaries and family prayers.

GMA hits back, says foes unfit to rule

From page A1

sies at the expense of our poor, because they seek to turn down our society."

In a speech before police officers and women at a mass oath-taking and awarding ceremonies in Malacañang, she said her detractors "have no platform, they have no concrete and viable plan to help the poor."

"They only have time to reverse progress," the President said, noting that this act was "the most cynical manipulation of hardworking and caring Filipinos."

Ms Arroyo made the statements a day after a Pulse Asia survey conducted at the height of allegations that she rigged the 2004 presidential election, showed that 61 percent of Filipinos favored a life without her leadership. The survey was commissioned by the opposition.

'I can govern'

Pulse Asia, which conducted the survey nationwide on June 20-23, noted that Ms Arroyo's disapproval rating was "unprecedentedly high" at 46 percent and her distrust rating "record breaking" at 53 percent.

The President is fighting for her political life amid allegations she rigged the May 2004 vote, a controversy that has triggered street protests, battered financial markets and fueled talk of a military takeover.

Ms Arroyo said she could govern better than those in the opposition.

"People asked, can I govern? Yes I can govern and I am governing," she said.

Ms Arroyo said her appointments of Court of Appeals Presiding Justice Romeo Brawner as new election commissioner and of Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn and anti-"jueteng" czar were part of her efforts at improving governance.

Livelihood

Ms Arroyo also talked about the headway her administration had achieved in providing livelihood to the poor with the release of P20 million in loans for two million entrepreneurs.

She said micro-financing for the poor had been "working quietly but effectively in the last four years."

The President announced that the government was able to secure new micro-finance funds amounting to P700 million, courtesy of Land Bank of the Philippines, National Development Corp. and the National Livelihood Support Funds.

She told her audience of women and police officers that they could avail themselves of the funds, acknowledging they might need to augment their incomes.

Worsening quality of life

The findings of the Pulse Asia survey on the quality of life of Filipinos is not favorable to the Arroyo administration.

Compared to their quality of life during the Estrada administration, 50 percent of those polled by Pulse Asia acknowledged that theirs was worsening under the Arroyo administration.

About 90 percent said their family's quality of life would remain the same or get worse should the Arroyo administration stay in power until 2010, according to Pulse Asia.

The independent polling firm said Filipinos rate the present administration as inferior to the Estrada administration.

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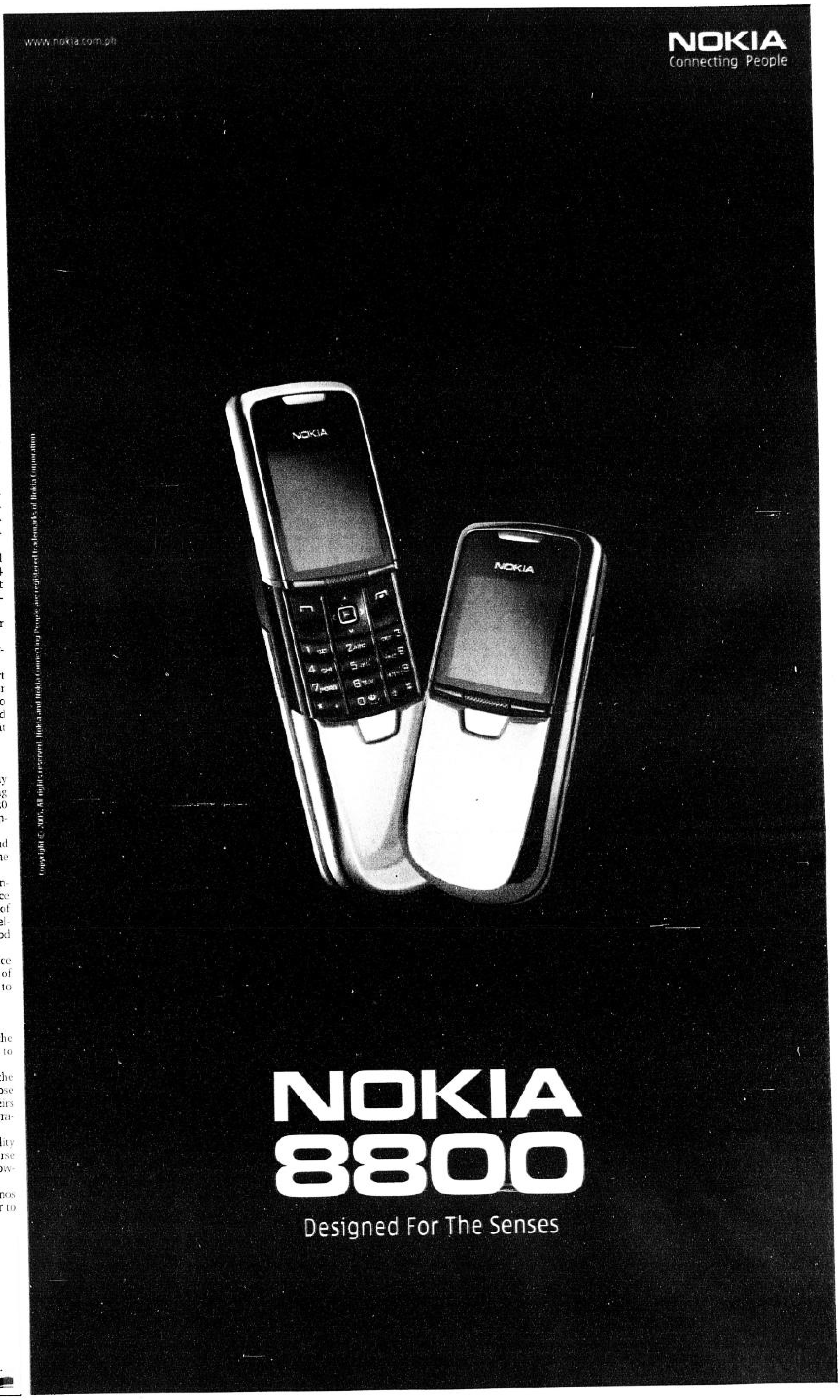
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GMA tells Cabinet: Quit

From page A1

ligious circles were "convinced that the President has lost moral ground." Ten other secretaries were also poised to follow suit.

De Leon said that the two Cabinet officials had met with the AMRSP yesterday morning.

De Leon declined to name the two Cabinet men but the INQUIRER learned from an independent source that they were Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima and Trade Secretary Juan Santos.

'The plotters'

A Malacañang source close to the President did not only identify Purisima but also named Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Deles as among those quitting. The source described them as "plotters" in the Cabinet who were attempting to install Vice President Noli de Castro as president.

The source said Purisima allegedly met with De Castro in Hong Kong two days ago and had lunch with evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva at the Tower Club yesterday.

"Then he [Purisima] invited the Cabinet members who are planning to resign to join him at the Hyatt Hotel and sleep there tonight so they can have a press conference (today)," the source told the INQUIRER.

The source said the President has called a meeting of the Cabinet at 11 a.m. to accept the courtesy resignations, then reorganize her new team.

"So what resignation are they going to announce tomorrow when they have all been considered resigned," the source said.

Federalism

In asking for the resignation of her Cabinet, Ms Arroyo said she would ask sectors to give her names of candidates to replace those who would not be reappointed. She said the new Cabinet would be given a free hand on government management while she focused on fundamental changes in the Constitution and confront such issues as federalism.

"This is neither a ploy nor gimmick," Ms Arroyo said. "Our country is hungry for a resolution to the political uncertainties that have plagued us these past few weeks.

Reacting to the President's address, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said, "these are signs that the end is near."

Bravura

"As usual, she's putting up a bravura, hoping she can manage to hang on despite the obvious lack of support. By asking the Cabinet to tender their resignation, she is actually jumping the gun on them," Pimentel said.

NG PANGULO NG

STRESSING a point, President Arroyo addresses an audience of women achievers and policemen during a mass oath-taking and awarding rites at the Rizal Ceremonial Hall in Malacañang. EDWIN BACASMAS

In her address, Ms Arroyo said that she apologized to the nation two weeks ago for a "lapse in judgment" in talking over a bugged telephone with Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano during last year's balloting.

"Shameless people have peddled the lie that I confessed to cheating," she said. She lamented the nation's political system had degenerated that it was difficult to live within it with "hands totally untainted."

Our country is hungry

Ms Arroyo also said she was forced to come out with these reforms now rather than wait for her State of the Nation Address on July 25 because "our country is hungry" for a resolution to the political uncertainties that have plagued us these past few weeks.

She said that for her to resign "under circumstances that connote an Edsa III would condemn any successor to the possibility of an Edsa IV, then an Edsa V, and so on, unless our political system was first reformed to make it more responsive to the people's will, such that changes in leadership come about in an orderly and stable manner."

The President said she would collaborate with lawmakers and civil groups to amend the Constitution "to confront such basic issues as federalism, the character of the legislative process, reducing red tape in government processes, running for public office under a true party system and with less need to raise campaign funds, modernizing the economic provisions of our Constitution."

Political truth

She said that "the biggest, most painful political truth was that over the years, our political system has degenerated to such an extent that it is very difficult to live within the system with hands totally untainted."

Ms Arroyo also hit back at her critics in Congress and the Senate. "We have endless investigations and scandals in aid of politics and media projection rather than in aid of legislation or executive action," she said.

"It is very painful for me to know that among many of our countrymen today, I have been demonized as the 'bad guy.' This is unfair."

The President, however, took a reconciliatory stance later in her message. "I do not blame any individual or political block for this sad state of affairs. We are collectively to be blamed so we must collectively be the solution," the President said.

Catholic schools' position: Resignation is GMA's decision

By Alcuin Papa and Christian V. Esguerra

AFTER a four-hour "emotional" meeting yesterday, administrators of Catholic schools in the country left to President Macapagal-Arroyo the decision to resign in the face of controversies rocking her administration.

Administrators of the Catholic Educators Association of the Philippines (CEAP) also said the impeachment process against Ms Arroyo should be allowed "to go its way."

The CEAP position is similar to the stand taken by the dean of the Ateneo Law School but is different from that of the administrators of De La Salle University (DLSU) who have asked Ms Arroyo to step down.

While a growing number of groups want the President to resign for allegedly rigging the 2004 elections, supporters of Ms Arroyo are coming out in the open.

The country's largest organization of evangelical churches—the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC)—is giving the President a "chance."

Provincial governors also want the President to stay in office but they do not mind having Vice President Noli de Castro as her successor if she resigns or is impeached.

At a meeting at the St. Scholastica College in Ermita, Manila, Fr. Roderick Salazar SVD, CEAP national president, told reporters Ms Arroyo "should decide if the situation calls for her to step down as what some sectors are asking her to do."

"Madam President, this issue (resignation) we leave to you. (It is something) your conscience should address based on what you think is good for the nation," Salazar said.

If Arroyo decided to stay, Salazar said CEAP would want to see "real reforms in government" for the benefit of the country.

Monsignor Gerardo Santos, CEAP-National Capital Region head, said they rejected the use of violence to resolve the controversies, saying it is "unacceptable."

Salazar noted that around 200 school administrators were present at the meeting, which he described as "long and difficult." He said CEAP's stand was a product of a "consensus."

The group will come out with their statement in the coming days. This will also be disseminated to their other members around the country. The CEAP counts some 1,200 Catholic schools as members.

CEAP board member Ulan Sarmiento of the San Beda Colleges said the four-hour meeting had at times turned "emotional" with representatives from the DLSU stressing their position that the President should resign.

Santos said CEAP's stand was in line with an earlier pastoral letter released by Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales.

Santos said that members could come up with their individual stand on the matter and that their students and faculty would not be barred from joining protest actions.

For its part, PCEC wants the President to "allow the constitutional process to arrive at a speedy and just resolution of the issues confronting the presidency."

"We're giving her a chance," PCEC chair Bishop Efraim Tendero told the INQUIRER in a phone interview, shortly after his group drafted its position at its 26th national assembly in Bacolod yesterday afternoon.

The PCEC has around two million members represented by 65 denominations, 132 mission organizations and more than 20,000 local evangelical churches nationwide, he said.

At a press conference in Malacañang, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, chair of the League of Provinces of the Philippines, said governors would recognize the successor of the President only if she resigned or was impeached by Congress and not through extra-constitutional means such as people power.

Singson led a big delegation of governors from all over the country who met with the President over lunch in Malacañang yesterday where they presented a manifesto (signed by 56 of the 79 governors in the country) supporting the President's stand to finish her full term and calling an end to the "jueteng" and wiretapping investigations in Congress.

In Cebu City, multi-sectoral groups have asked Ms Arroyo to hold on as they condemned calls for her resignation.

Jarvis Prochina, coordinator of Gawin Natin, Lakas Pinoy, said this was the sentiment of the groups that attended the conference yesterday.

Cebu Gov. Gregorio Sanchez, who was to speak in the forum, said he received an invitation from Assistant Secretary Danilo Consumido, chief operations officer of the Office of External Affairs of the Office of the President.

More than 200 persons joined the forum. Among them were members of urban poor organizations, vendors, farmers and GMA Movers. *With reports from Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau*

RESIGN
OUST GMA

MORE of the same by now familiar refrain from militant groups massing at the Liwasang Bonifacio. ERIK ARAZAS

2007 ELECTIONS!

PRO-DEMOCRACY rally, for a change, at the Welcome Rotunda in Quezon City, is no doubt in support of President Arroyo. ERIK ARAZAS

Cha-cha 'exit option' for GMA in 10 months, says Ramos

From page A1

power was only brought about by a lack of an alternative.

Better than Noli

He said the country was better off being led by Ms Arroyo rather than Vice President Noli de Castro.

The former President suggested that Congress immediately convene a constituent assembly that would craft the new Constitution so parliamentary elections could be held.

He suggested doing all these in 10 months.

High commission

Together with the forming of a constituent assembly, Ramos said Congress should also establish a high commission.

The commission would be an independent body composed of well-selected leaders who would examine the country's political and economic situation and come up with prescriptions such as policy reforms.

Ramos said he was leaving it up to Congress to come up with the procedures of forming the high commission, but he underscored the need for the independent body to be given the full power to come up with solutions.

He said the commission would have already come up with prescribed remedies for the country's political and economic ills by December.

For its part, the constituent assembly should come up with the draft of the new Constitution by Jan. 1 so that it could be put to a plebiscite by Feb. 14.

Elections in May

The new Constitution would take effect in March and the election of new leaders would be held on May 15, according to Ramos.

On comments that his proposals failed to address allegations of electoral fraud hurled against Ms Arroyo, Ramos suggested that the public forget about it for the moment.

He called on the public to work for sobriety, saying getting the country back into shape requires that it focus on getting the suggested reforms done.

While Ms Arroyo is still in office, opponents of Ms Arroyo are contemplating four "post-Gloria" scenarios.

These are a revolutionary government, snap elections, a military junta, and a De Castro presidency.

At a forum on the campus of the University of the Philippines in Quezon City, groups from the academe and civil society discussed the topic, "After Gloria, What's Next?"

A group led by former UP president Francisco Nemenzo Jr. believes a revolutionary transitional government is what the country needs for genuine and fundamental social reforms.

Carol Araullo, head of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, thinks a patriotic and democratic council of leaders representing all sectors will be easier to carry out.

Evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva said Ms Arroyo should "return" the presidency, but if this did not happen, a "justified People Power" may take place.

No to snap polls

A snap election is not palatable to the group called UP Alliance Working for Arroyo's Removal, as it will only constitute a changing of the guard.

So is a military junta, though Nemenzo said military support would be important for their group's purposes.

With the way things are going, however, a De Castro presidency might just happen, said Araullo.

The group will not be able to do something about it, if this happens, she said. The only alternative is for a massive uprising in the streets, she said.

"I'm not saying tens of thousands, not even hundreds of thousands. I'm talking about millions of people, who will vote not in a snap election but with their feet," Araullo said.

'Stolen presidency'

The group had differing versions of a "post-Gloria" eventuality, but Nemenzo noted that the first step to all these was Ms Arroyo's ouster.

Villanueva said Ms Arroyo's presidency was a "stolen presidency, and the byproduct of a stolen election."

There is a "moral justification" for her ouster, he said. *With a report from Cynthia D. Balana.*

Wrong Arroyo exiled–Nene

From page A1

husband left for the United States.

The First Gentleman left Wednesday noon for San Francisco via Hong Kong. The President's elder son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, and his family flew to San Francisco later that evening.

Accused of accepting "jueteng" payoffs, Ms Arroyo's husband and son have become lightning rods for opposition attacks on the President. Their departure is expected to ease the pressure on Ms Arroyo who is fending off charges she rigged the 2004 presidential election.

"I urge President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo not to turn deaf and blind to the reality that she has lost the trust and support of the people instead of entertaining the illusion that she can hold on to power and survive the political crisis," Pimentel said.

Face truth

"The President is harboring false hopes that she can regain public sympathy and blunt the mounting calls for her resignation by sending First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo on a temporary exile to the United States," he added.

Pimentel said Ms Arroyo was refusing to face the truth by casting doubt on unfavorable survey findings, referring to a Palace statement that the survey results "reflect the public perception and not necessarily the truth."

"Ms Arroyo should swallow the bitter pill and accept that the most decent thing to do now is for her to resign in the light of the latest Pulse Asia survey showing that 61 percent of Filipinos believe that they would be better off without her," Pimentel said.

The senator warned that the President's refusal to step down would only increase the likelihood that extremist groups may overthrow her through a military coup or people power revolt.

Mikey Arroyo

Mikey Arroyo refused to talk with newsmen who covered his family's departure for the United States on Wednesday night, saying their insistence in interviewing him was "traumatizing" his eldest daughter.

The congressman, his wife Angela, and daughters Mikaela Gloria and Eva Angelique, who is still an infant, left for San Francisco on board Philippine Airlines Flight No. PR 104 that took off at 10:30 p.m. San Francisco is a favorite vacation area of the First Family.

Mikey, who is known for his short temper, gave an exasperated smile at GMA 7 reporter Susan Enriquez who kept asking him questions.

"*Maawa ka sa anak ko* (Have pity on my child). Don't traumatize my daughter," he told Enriquez.

Before entering the gate, Mikey bade the media goodbye and apologized for his behavior.

2 officers quit medal board over 'undeserved' award

By Dona Pazzibugan

TWO senior military officials have quit from the 15-man Medal of Valor Board in protest of the conferment of the highest military combat award to Army Lt. Col. Noel Buan.

Army Col. Arturo Ortiz and Marine Lt. Col. Custodio Parcon resigned from the board last May 5 reportedly to protest Armed Forces chief Gen. Efren Abu's veto of the board's recommendation to recall the medals given to Buan and one of his men, Sgt. Leopoldo Diokno.

Ortiz also resigned as chief of the AFP Joint Operations Center last June 10. He is waiting for reassignment.

Parcon is reportedly on military schooling in Hawaii.

Both Medal of Valor awardees, Ortiz and Parcon had questioned giving the prestigious award to Buan and Diokno.

"The Board and the higher authorities railroaded the awarding of the Medal of Valor to Colonel Buan and Sgt. Leopoldo Diokno despite very disturbing moral and ethical concerns," said a military officer privy to the board's deliberations.

The decision to give the award to Buan and Diokno was "a desecration to this highly revered and highest award," the officer added.

Buan and Diokno were awarded for neutralizing Abu Sayyaf sub-commander Hamsiraji Sali in Basilan on April 8, 2004.

They received their Medal of Valor awards from President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang last Dec. 21.

In February, Abu ordered a review when the awards were questioned.

After deliberation, the 15-man board reportedly decided to recall the medals and to award instead the Distinguished Conduct Star, the second highest combat award, to Buan and Diokno.

Another military officer who spoke on condition of anonymity said the board found that Buan and Diokno's acts did not meet the criteria of "intrepidity and conspicuous act of gallantry above and beyond the call of duty."

The officer added the neutralization of Sali and five of his men "had the element of deceit" since the bandit leader was reportedly about to surrender to authorities that day.

It was also found that Buan's men outnumbered Sali's that day.

Other Medal of Valor awardees had their men greatly outnumbered by the enemy.

But Abu vetoed the recommendation of the board to downgrade the award because this "might offend the President," an officer said.

Ms Macapagal announced that Buan would receive the Medal of Valor reportedly even before the board could start their deliberations.

BUAN with controversial medal EDWIN BACASMAS

Ortiz, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1979, was awarded the Medal of Valor on Dec. 6, 1990.

Then a young captain, Ortiz led five joint teams from the 606th Special Forces Company and militiamen in a two-hour battle with communist rebels in Murcia, Negros Occidental on April 6, 1990.

In the end they killed 84 rebels, overran a 28-hut rebel camp and recovered a cache of firearms.

Parcon, a member of PMA Class 1987, received the medal on Dec. 20, 1994.

From May 7 to 15 that year, Parcon led his men in tracking down and storming the Abu Sayyaf's Camp Al Madinah in Basilan.

They successfully recovered kidnap victim Luis Anthony Biel III, killed 46 bandits and recovered rebel arsenal.

Buan, a member of PMA class 1984, was captured by the New People's Army in 1999 when he was then the intelligence officer in Southern Tagalog. He was released a year later by his NPA captors in Mindoro following a series of negotiations.

'Juetengate' misses TV prime time

By TJ Burgonio

IF YOU missed the Senate's inquiry into the "juetengate" scandal on TV yesterday, don't fret.

The Senate canceled its public hearing into the illegal numbers game and reset it for Tuesday due to the unavailability of some witnesses, Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. said.

Villar said the committee on public order and illegal drugs which he chairs would have to work around the schedules of the witnesses to ensure their attendance in the sixth and next hearing.

The senator said that, for instance, Chief Supt. Restituto Mosqueda (ret.), former Region V police director who appeared as a witness in the last two hearings, fell ill this week.

"We (have) to ensure that everybody could attend," Villar said in a phone interview.

Mosqueda denied any involvement in jueteng or that he had asked an admitted bagwoman to deliver payoffs from gambling lords to President Macapagal-Arroyo's son, Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo, and brother-in-law, Reg. Ignacio Arroyo, in Congress.

Villar's committee released a list of 20 resource persons for the next hearing, including Mosqueda, the alleged bagwoman Sandra Cam and Bishop Oscar Cruz, whose anti-gambling crusade started the investigation.

Also invited were Police Director Rodolfo Tor of the PNP Directorate for Plans; Mely Sorra and Police Insp. Leonito Cantollas, both of the PNP Crime Laboratory, and admitted jueteng operators Wilfredo Mayor and Demosthenes Abraham Riva, among others.

But Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, suspected Pampanga gambling lord, and Gov. Armand Sanchez of Batangas were not on the list.

"I'd like to say that I am worried about the fact there seems to be a reluctance on the part of the two committees to summon the jueteng lords, particularly Gov. Armand Sanchez of Batangas," Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. told reporters Wednesday.

"And the reason apparently, I hope I am wrong, [is that] Governor Sanchez enjoys the support of some big politicians because I think he is either the actual or the treasurer behind the scenes of a political party."

Villar, however, said suspected gambling lords would eventually be summoned after the Senate wraps up its hearings on Cam's allegations on the involvement of the Arroyos in jueteng.

"We just can't jump from one issue to another. Otherwise, we won't finish anything," he said.

RETURN OF THE JUDAY

Actress turns tables on BIR

By Armand N. Nocum

NOW, it's Juday's turn.

Actress Judy Ann Santos yesterday filed with the Department of Justice a counter-affidavit and counter-charge against the Bureau of Internal Revenue for allegedly falsifying and committing perjury when it swore on the veracity of documents showing that she allegedly had some P1.7 million in tax liabilities in 2002.

SANTOS

In fact, Santos said, the revenue office owed her P1,095,430 in overpaid taxes.

In a complaint she submitted to the DOJ, Santos (Judy Ann Lumagui Santos in real life) said the case filed against her on May 19 was "absolutely falsified and grossly perjured" because the six tax examiners who looked into her tax records failed to include the withholding taxes the entertainment companies had deducted from her talent fees.

"Clearly, the taxes withheld at source were deliberately and maliciously omitted by the complainant and his witnesses in their perjured joint-affidavit. Had complainant and his examiners been more diligent, prudent and circumspect, they could have ascertained the actual facts and circumstances of this tax situation," the actress said in the complaint against Internal Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. and six of his men.

The BIR said in its complaint that Santos earned a total of P14.76 million for taxable year 2002—P11 million from ABS-CBN, P2.9 million from Viva Productions Inc., and P815,000 from Star Cinema Productions.

The BIR said her tax liabilities amounted to P1.7 million.

But Santos, through lawyer Bonifacio A. Alentajan, produced documents showing that the three entertainment firms withheld some P2.8 million in taxes from the actress' talent fees.

Thus, minus the estimated P1.7 million tax liabilities, Santos said she was deemed to have an "overpayment" of a little over a million in withholding taxes.

She said she had "duly paid her taxes for 2002, and even overpaid by (P1 million), which has not been refunded by the (BIR) until today."

On these grounds, Santos said the BIR's complaint was a "false and perjured accusation" based on a "false and fabricated" joint affidavit of six internal revenue examiners who looked into her tax records

She asked the court to dismiss the DOF case against her for lack of legal basis.

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Ford No Boundaries

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

G8 to yield to Bush on climate change

GLENEAGLES, Scotland—Group of Eight leaders meeting here Thursday were poised to yield to US demands to produce a bland statement on global warming, risking the wrath of scientists and environmentalists worldwide.

US President George Bush, speaking just ahead of formal G8 summit talks at a heavily guarded golf resort in the pristine Scottish countryside, reiterated his opposition to the UN's Kyoto Protocol climate pact as too costly and unfair for the American economy.

The deal expires in 2012.

"Now it is time to get beyond the Kyoto period and develop a strategy that is inclusive not only of the United States but also with developing nations," Bush said after a meeting with British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Global warming is the most contentious topic at a Group of Eight summit gathering the leaders of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the United States.

The US and British leaders, close allies in the Iraq war, were speaking after a working breakfast to try to dovetail their positions before the opening of formal G8 talks.

Bush said there was a "consensus to move forward together." But he reiterated his long-standing demands that a global warming treaty include developing countries such as China and India, which are currently excluded from Kyoto provisions requiring specific pollution cuts.

"The way to move forward together is to recognize, one, there is a problem, which I have since I have been the president. Two, that there's a constructive way to deal with the problem," the US leader said.

"The most constructive way to deal with the problem from our perspective is one, to not only include the United States in discussions, but also include developing countries in discussion, countries like India and China," he said.

Asked whether he had changed his stance, Bush said: "My position has been pretty steady." Bush opposes Kyoto's call for a cap on carbon pollution, declaring that this would be ruinously expensive for the US economy, which is chronically dependent on oil, gas and coal.

Blair, who has placed progress on combating climate change and boosting development to aid Africa at the heart of the three-day summit, appeared to acknowledge that a hard-hitting statement here was unlikely. Africa will be the main topic on Friday.

"There is no point going over the Kyoto debate," he said.

"We're not going to negotiate some new treaty on climate change here at the G8 meeting. All it is about is seeing whether it would be possible in the future to bring people back into consensus in the future.

"Not just America and Europe and Japan, but America, Europe Japan and emerging economies which in the future will be the major consumers of energy.

"Can we achieve this? I don't know. It is important we least begin a process of dialogue." The summit was nonetheless expected to issue a declaration and a "Gleneagles Plan of Action" on global warming.

But the two climate-change documents were on course to be gutted of any controversy or of any significant pressure on the United States, angry environmentalists complained.

References to the Kyoto Protocol, the UN pact on cutting carbon gases that trap solar heat and stoke Earth's surface temperature, as well as scientific warnings about the urgency of the problem, were pared down or excised, they said.

Instead of targets and promises of money, the summit would back a market-based approach on tackling climate change, while pledging verbal support for better energy efficiency, nuclear power, "clean" coal and other novel technologies to help reduce pollution levels, summit sources said. *AFP*

BRITAIN'S Queen Elizabeth II poses for the family photo with G8 leaders, (left to right) US President Bush, Britain's Prince Philip, French President Chirac, Queen Elizabeth II, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Russian President Vladimir Putin, back row (left to right), European Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso, Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin. AFP

Menu for Queen's G8 summit dinner

GLENEAGLES, Scotland—Menu from Wednesday night's banquet for G8 leaders hosted by Britain's Queen Elizabeth II:

- Menu

Marrbury Smoked Salmon with Roasted Langoustines and Herb Salad

Roast Fillet of Glenearn Lamb Broad Beans and Peas

Aubergine Caviar

Parmesan Polenta

Textures of Chocolate

- Wines

Louis Roederer Quartet NV, Anderson Valley, California

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spaetlese (JJ Pruem) 1995

Masseto 1994 Ornellaia (Bolgheri)

Chateau Climens, Barsac 1990

- After Dinner

Royal Vintage Port 1960

Iced Smirnoff Black Russian Vodka

Crown Royal Canadian Whisky Makutsuru Sake

Royal Lochnagar 12 Year Old Single Malt *AFP*

A. Einstein
53.

AGAINST A-BOMB

An autographed photo given by Albert Einstein to Japanese philosopher Seiei Shinohara during their correspondence in 1953 and 1954 which deplored the genius' lack of power to prevent the use of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki 60 years ago. AFP

Experts see return of al-Qaida to Afghanistan

PARIS—Members of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network may have returned to Afghanistan en masse to bolster Taliban militants fighting US and Afghan forces in the east and south of the country, officials and analysts say.

Although no one has come forward with any hard proof, evidence seems to indicate that hardline al-Qaida fighters have gone back to the country that was their home base for years until US-led forces toppled the Taliban in late 2001.

The governor of the southern Afghan province of Kandahar, Gul Agha Shirzai, said after a deadly suicide attack at a mosque last month that police "found documents on the (bomber's) body that showed he was an Arab." He told reporters that this proved that "Arab al-Qaida teams had entered Afghanistan and had planned terrorist attacks." Afghan Defense Minister Abdur Rahim Wardak on Monday told the New York Times: "There is a regrouping of al-Qaida, and it seems they are going to pay more attention to Afghanistan. We are running into foreign fighters here and there." And Afghan Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah said on a visit to India this week that the Taliban had become "numerically stronger" and that the likely explanation was that they were getting "outside support." The head of the UN mission in Afghanistan, France's Jean Arnault, warned the UN Security Council in late June that the security situation in the country was worsening.

Arnault told the council that the Taliban rebels seem to have "more funding, more deadly weaponry, more powerful media for propaganda and more aggressive, cruel and indiscriminate tactics." Since the start of the year, attacks committed by Taliban militants have resulted in nearly 600 deaths, as opposed to 850 deaths in similar attacks for all of 2004, according to an AFP tally.

Michael Scheuer, who headed up the CIA's special "Bin Laden unit" from 1996 to 1999, sees nothing shocking in the recent reports of an increased al-Qaida presence in Afghanistan. *AFP*

Humans arrive, beasts go extinct, study finds

WASHINGTON—The extinction of most of Australia's large animals occurred around 45,000 years ago, shortly after the arrival of humans. A study suggests that human burning of the landscape forced dietary changes that killed off many of the animals.

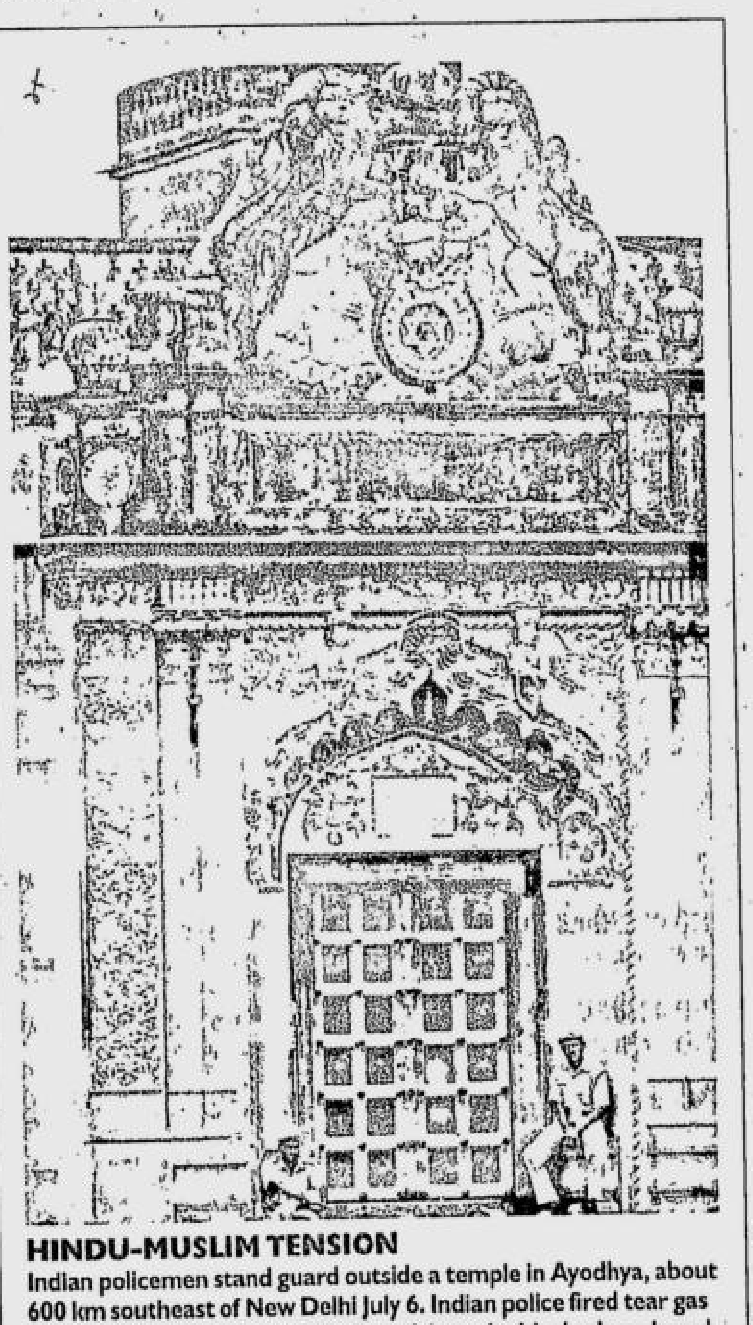
Researchers studying ancient eggshells from two types of large birds, as well as the teeth of wombats, found a change in the types of carbon the animals had ingested, indicating a change in diet.

Before the extinction, grasses, trees and shrubs were commonly eaten—but then grasses disappeared from the animals' diet, the researchers reported in Friday's issue of the journal Science.

"Humans are the major suspect," Marilyn Fogel of the Carnegie Institution said in a statement.

People set large-scale fires for a variety of reasons, including hunting, clearing and signaling other groups, she said.

Gifford Miller of the University of Colorado commented that "the opportunistic feeders adapted and the picky eaters went extinct." *AP*



HINDU-MUSLIM TENSION

Indian policemen stand guard outside a temple in Ayodhya, about 600 km southeast of New Delhi July 6. Indian police fired tear gas on Wednesday to disperse Hindu activists who blocked roads and closed shops in dozens of cities to protest an attack on a holy site that has been a tinderbox for Hindu-Muslim violence. REUTERS

US births by foreign mothers increase

NEW YORK—Nearly 23 percent of all people born in the United States in 2002 had a foreign-born mother—the largest percentage since a wave of immigration more than 90 years ago, a study of birth records by a private nonprofit group shows.

The Center for Immigration Studies, which favors restrictions on immigration, said the country has not seen as large a share of its children born to immigrants since 1910, when the number reached 22 percent as shiploads of Italians and eastern Europeans crowded America's port cities.

This time, Hispanics are the driving force, according to the study being released Thursday. Nearly 1 in 10 births in the United States in 2002 was to a woman born in Mexico. Hispanics, as a whole, accounted for 59 percent of all births by immigrants.

The boom in second-generation Americans is bound to have an effect on the country that is equal, if not greater, than the sea changes of the early 20th century, said Steven Camarota, the Center for Immigration Studies researcher who wrote the report.

He said the influx of immigrants in the early 1900s was curtailed significantly by a tightening of entry rules and two world wars, and that no such cutoff appears imminent now.

"It just tells you that we are headed into uncharted territory," Camarota said.

The Center for Immigration Studies compiled the data from birth records collected by The National Center for Health Statistics. The records include both legal and illegal immigrants, but do not indicate where a child's father was born.

Children of immigrant mothers accounted for about 915,800 of the 4 million births in the United States in 2002. By comparison, 228,486 of the 3.7 million births in the US in 1970 were to foreign-born mothers, or about 6 percent.

Camarota said the growing size of immigrant communities could slow their assimilation into American culture and make it more difficult "to have a cohesiveness of national vision."

Pro-immigration groups rejected that argument.

"For 400 years, immigrants have come to our shores, worked hard, had families and built the most successful nation in history," said Frank Sharry, executive director of the National Immigration Forum.

"The notion that we are going to be the one group that does not become American is ridiculous," said Lisa Navarrete, a spokesperson for the National Council of La Raza, a Hispanic advocacy group. *AP*

Rice to 'snub' Asean talks

WASHINGTON—US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice will not attend a key Southeast Asian meeting this month, officials said Wednesday amid warnings that the move could be viewed as a slight by the region's leaders.

Rice had told Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) foreign ministers that she could not make it to the Asean Ministerial Meeting in the Laotian capital Vientiane in late July due to a clash of schedules, regional diplomats said.

But some officials had linked her skipping of the trip to concerns in Washington that the region was not pushing enough for democratic reforms in military-ruled Burma.

As this would be the first time in about two decades that a US Secretary of State is not participating in the annual Asean talks, some Asean leaders may perceive it as downgrading of US participation in the region's most important diplomatic event.

The meeting includes a July 28-29 post-ministerial dialogue between Asean and its key trading partners, notably the United States, European Union, China, Japan and Russia, as well as an Asean Regional Forum (ARF), the only official security meeting in the Asia-Pacific region.

Rice, who is expected to visit Africa during that period, would be represented by her deputy Robert Zoellick, the former US Trade Representative and an old Asean hand, to the meetings.

Unlike her predecessor Colin Powell, who maintained a personal touch in relations with his Asean counterparts, Rice has delegated much of the work in the region to Zoellick.

Her top priority in Asia is the Korean nuclear crisis. *AFP*

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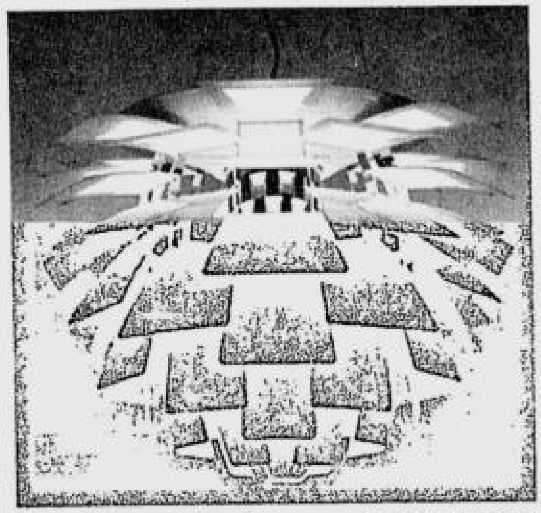

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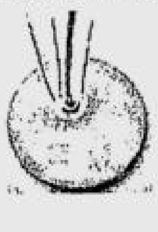

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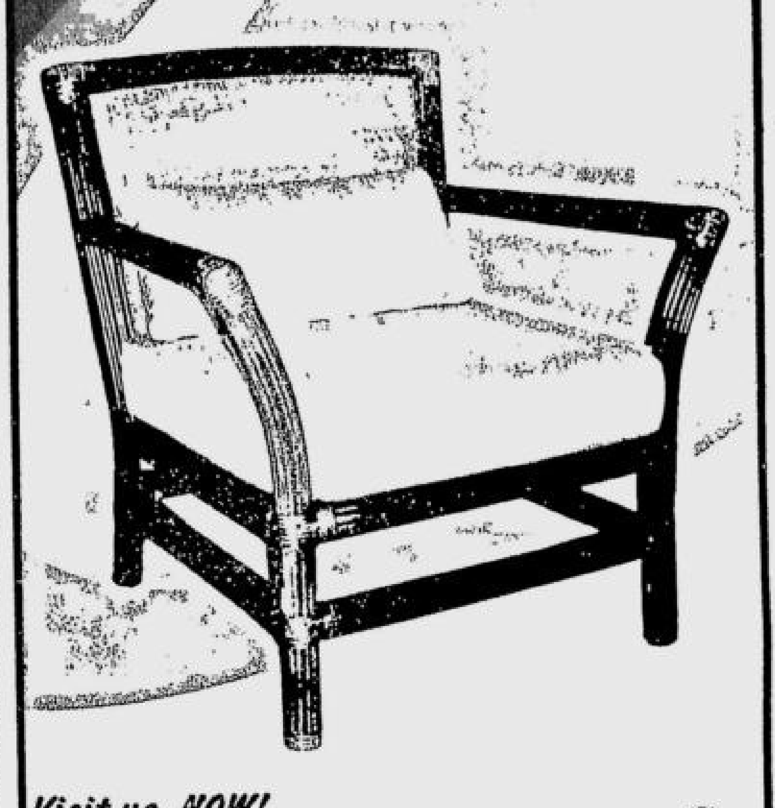

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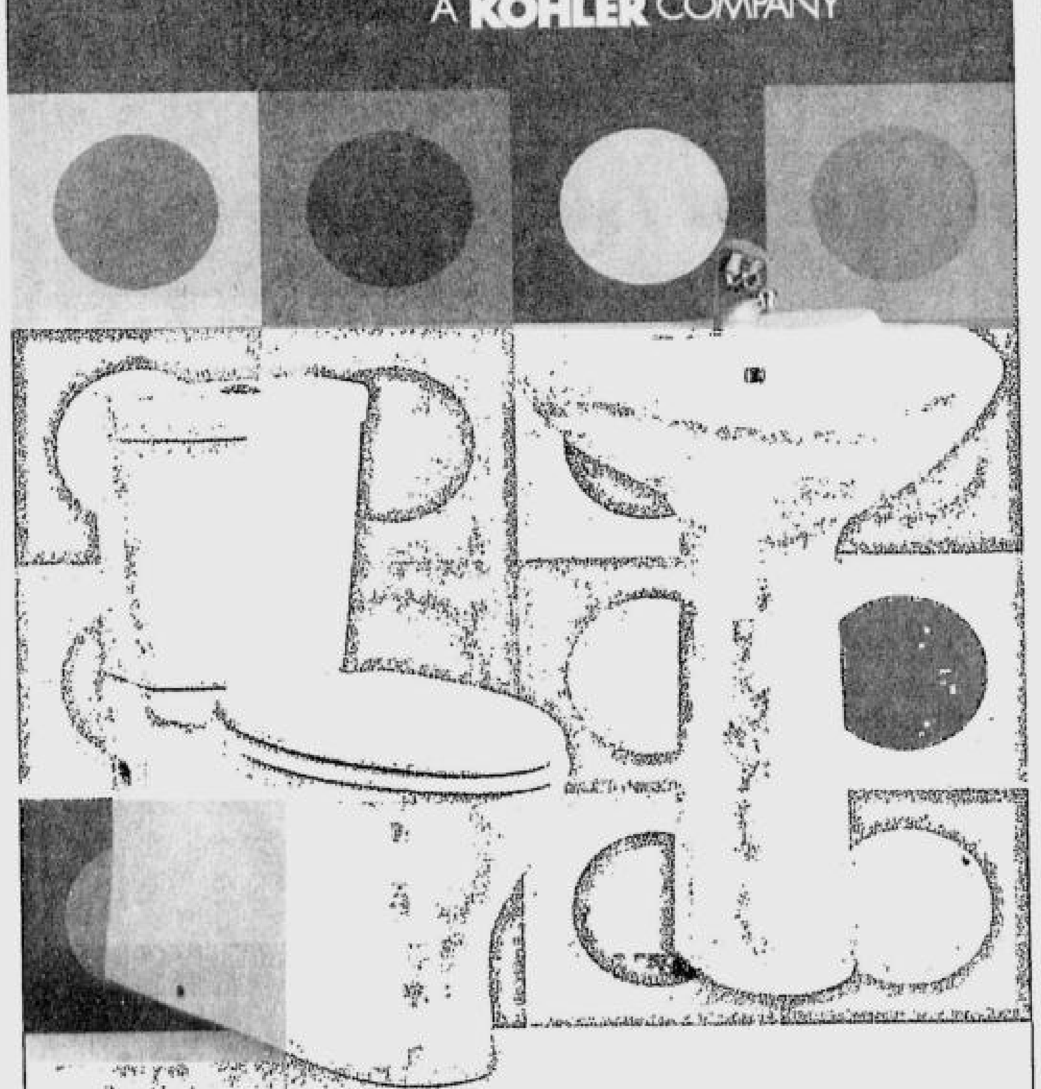

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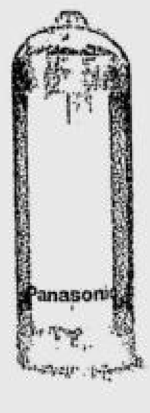

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Terror hits London; 40 killed in blasts

From page A1

Rights Commission warned London Muslims to stay at home to avoid any violence aimed at them.

The attacks came a day after a jubilant London was awarded the 2012 Olympic Games.

"I'm deeply saddened that this should happen at the heart of an Olympic city. Unfortunately there is no safe haven. No one can say their city is safe," said International Olympic Committee president Jacques Rogge in Singapore.

Italy's interior minister said all Europe was on alert.

Britain has been key ally of the United States in its war in Iraq, where al-Qaida is waging a bloody insurgency.

Police said two people were killed at Aldgate East underground station in the financial center of the city, with a further 90 people wounded. Around 100 wounded people were taken to Royal London Hospital, 10 of them in critical condition.

London's police chief Ian Blair said there were indications of explosives at the blast sites.

"We are concerned that this is a coordinated attack," he told Sky television.

London Mayor Ken Livingstone, speaking in Singapore, said suicide bombers may have been involved.

"I wish to speak to you directly—to those who came to London today to take lives," he said. "I know that you personally do not fear to give your own life in exchange for taking others, which is why you are so dangerous."

People were seen streaming out of one underground station covered with blood and soot. Passengers were evacuated from stations across the capital, many in shock and with their clothes ripped to shreds, witnesses said.

The city's streets rapidly emptied and financial markets plummeted as it became increasingly apparent that the blasts were an attack, and not a power surge on the underground train system as had first been reported.

Security experts said the blasts bore all the hallmarks of al-Qaida.

"If what we are looking at is a simultaneous bombing, and it does look like that, it would very certainly fit the classic al-Qaida methodology which centers precisely on that: multi-seated hits on transport and infrastructural targets," said Shane Brighton, intelligence expert at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence.

On the currency market, the safe-haven Swiss franc hit a six-week high against sterling and rose more than one percent against the dollar following the explosions.

"The market is showing a textbook reaction, buying safe-haven currencies like the Swiss franc and euro and away from the dollar," said Marios Maratheftis, currency strategist at Standard Chartered.

Oil prices initially fell three percent before recovering and London's FTSE stock exchange lost two percent.

US authorities were monitoring the situation. An official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there has been no credible, specific threat of an attack in the United States, but that analysts were sifting through recent intelligence for any evidence of follow-on attacks here or abroad, the official said.

After the London explosions, US cities began considering how to react.

In the nation's capital, bomb-sniffing dogs and armed police officers were dispatched to patrol subways and buses.

Reuters with AP report

AN INJURED tube passenger is escorted away from Edgware Road Tube Station in London following an explosion July 7. Near simultaneous explosions rocked the London subway and three double-decker buses at the morning rush hour, prompting officials to shut down the entire underground transport network. AP

NYT reporter jailed for refusal to reveal source

WASHINGTON—New York Times reporter Judith Miller was jailed for refusing to divulge a confidential source to a grand jury investigating the Bush administration's leak of an undercover CIA operative's name. Another reporter, Matthew Cooper of Time magazine, agreed to talk and avoided jail.

MILLER

Cooper agreed to cooperate with prosecutors Wednesday after disclosing that his source had given him permission to do so hours earlier. The about-face came after nearly two years of refusals to disclose the information.

The developments added further intrigue to what already was one of the most closely watched press freedom cases in recent history. The case evolved from questions about whether President George W. Bush's government misrepresented prewar intelligence on Iraq's weapons' capabilities.

"I do not view myself as above the law," Miller told US District Judge Thomas Hogan. "You are right to send me to prison."

But she said she had an obligation to protect a confidential source: "I do not make confidentiality pledges lightly, but when I do I must honor them."

Hogan was adamant that Miller comply with the court's order to testify.

"If she was given a pass on this, the next person who comes up" might refuse to cooperate as well, Hogan said. "There is still a realistic possibility that confinement might cause her to testify." AP

Review reaffirms use of pain drug Celebrex—Pfizer

NEW YORK—Pfizer Inc. said today that the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) review of COX-2 medicines has concluded, with the expert committee reaffirming use of Pfizer's COX-2 pain medicines Celebrex (celecoxib) and Dynastat (parecoxib sodium) as important options for treating arthritis and post-surgical pain.

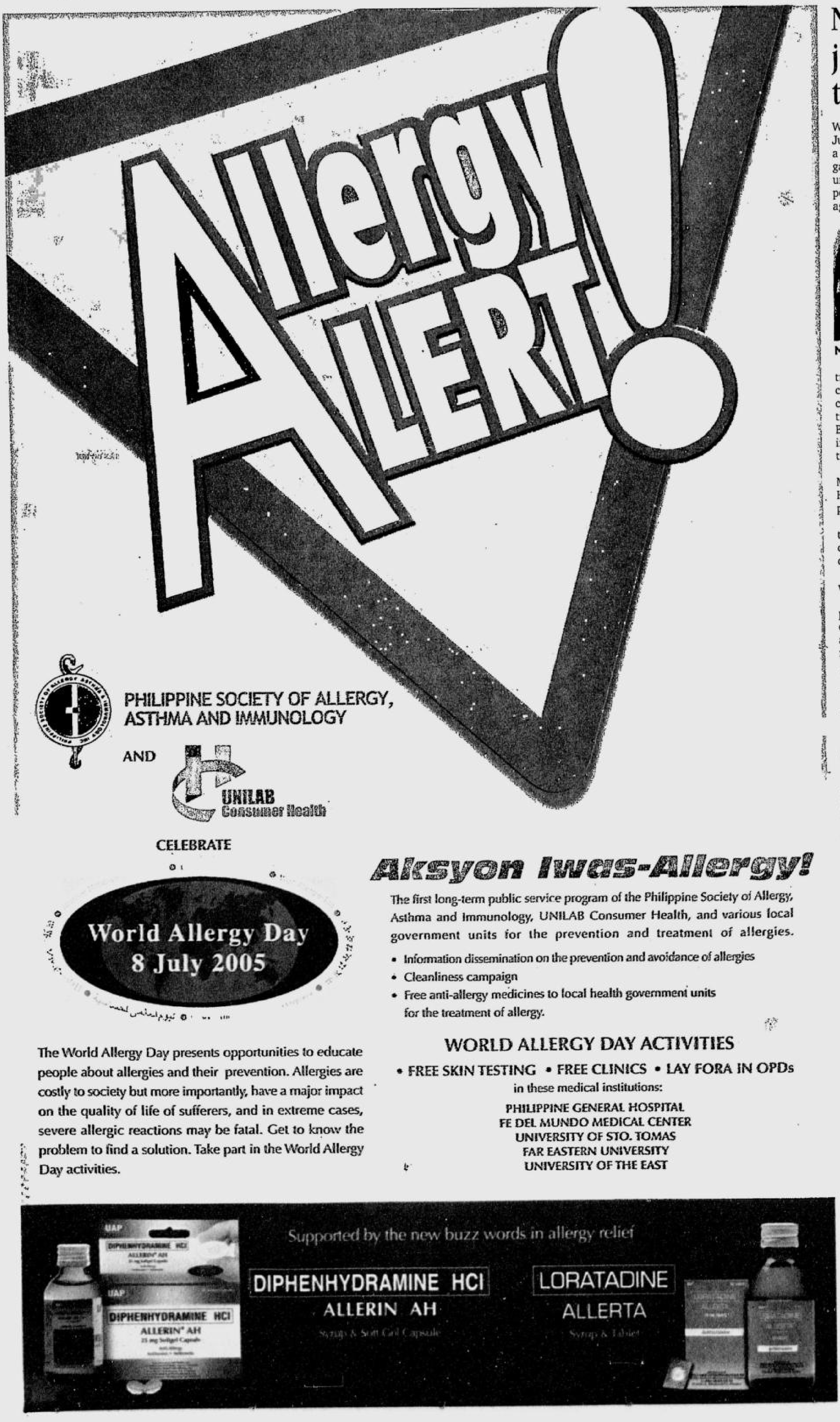
This decision follows an extensive benefit/risk review by the scientific committee of the European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMEA) which evaluated all available clinical data on selective COX-2 inhibitors to assess efficacy, gastrointestinal benefits and cardiovascular safety.

Pfizer, as it has throughout the process, will continue to work closely with CHMP and other regulatory agencies to ensure appropriate use of these medicines. In addition to previous prescribing advice issued in February 2005, additional precautions have been added in order that COX-2 medicines are prescribed appropriately and that individual patient needs and circumstances are considered.

"Overall this is good news for patients and physicians. The CHMP opinion marks the conclusion of the scientific review in the EU, and ensures that important treatments options such as Celebrex and Dynastat are available to help manage the pain and inflammation which affects many people," said Dr. Joseph Feczko, Pfizer's president of worldwide development.

Selective COX-2 medicines were designed to relieve pain with fewer serious gastrointestinal side effects associated with NSAIDs. Celebrex, for example, which has been studied in tens of thousands of patients worldwide, has been shown to be effective in reducing pain and inflammation and does so with a lower incidence of the serious gastrointestinal side effects associated with older NSAIDs.

Separately, the EMEA reaffirmed the use of Onsenal, the brand name for celecoxib when used in the rare, orphan indication of familial adenomatous polyposis, a precursor to colon cancer. Onsenal is the only medicine approved to treat this condition.



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World Allergy Day
8 July 2005

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Aksyon Iwas-Allergy!

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- Information dissemination on the prevention and avoidance of allergies
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Rape victim gets support from Mukhtar Mai

MULTAN, Pakistan—A Pakistani woman who has become the latest victim of gang-rape meted out as punishment against her family received a call of support Thursday from the woman whose similar case shone an international spotlight on the plight of women in some rural areas of the deeply conservative nation.

The latest attack is reminiscent of that of Mukhtar Mai, who was gang-raped in 2002 on orders of a village council, and is sure to increase concern that the government of President Gen. Pervez Musharraf has not succeeded in its pledge to end so-called "honor" attacks in which hundreds of women are killed, raped or maimed each year.

Both cases involve a woman targeted for punishment for the actions of a male relative.

The 30-year-old victim of the latest rape described her two-day ordeal in a phone conversation with The Associated Press from her hometown of Chaniot, about 250 km northwest of Multan, in eastern Pakistan.

She said eight men kidnapped her on June 30 and took her to a home.

"They stripped me naked, forcibly poured alcohol in my mouth and asked me to dance," she said. The Associated Press does not publish the names of victims in such cases unless they voluntarily come forward, as Mai has in an effort to bring attention to the plight of women in Pakistan.

The newest victim, who is married and a mother of three, said she was raped while the men watched pornographic movies.

"I cried, begged and touched the feet of those men and asked them to spare me in the name of God and the Koran (Islam's holy book)," she said. "But they said we will teach your family a lesson."

The family accuses a man from the victim's family of kidnapping and sexually assaulting a 17-year-old girl from the attackers' family. But Mahar Mumtaz, a local police official, said an investigation into that claim revealed the girl had relations with the man voluntarily.

Mumtaz said police learned of the June 30-July 1 attack only on Tuesday, when the victim's family came forward and revealed her ordeal. Seven people have been arrested, and one man is still at large.

On Thursday, the victim received a call from Mai, who said she praised her for her courage in coming forward.

"I think more women can be saved from such incidents by punishing those who molested me and this woman," she said.

Six men were sentenced to death in Mai's attack, but five of those sentences were commuted to life in prison. This year, a court threw out the cases of all 13 people originally charged in the rape, causing international outrage.

Concern was heightened by Musharraf's decision to bar Mai from traveling outside the country. The president, a key ally of Washington in its war on terror, argued he was afraid Mai would cast Pakistan in a bad light. After a sharp rebuke from the Bush administration, he ordered Mai's passport restored and her name stricken from an exit-control list.

Last week, Mai won a Supreme Court appeal overturning the acquittals of her attackers, who have been rearrested and face new sentencing.

Mai said she plans to travel to the victim's village to get more details. *AP*

Mars, Snickers chocolates to be destroyed in recall

SYDNEY, Australia—The manufacturer that recalled hundreds of thousands of Mars and Snickers bars following a contamination threat said Thursday there was no established link between its products and illnesses reported by people who ate the chocolate.

MasterFoods Australia New Zealand, the company that makes the Mars and Snickers bars in Australia, ordered the recall of both brands last week after receiving a letter claiming that seven contaminated bars had been placed on shelves in the Sydney area.

The company's president, Andy Weston-Webb, said about 30 people had called a special phone line to report various health complaints after eating the chocolate bars.

However, he said "no proper connection" had been made between the chocolates and the reported illnesses, which included stomach aches, diarrhea and headaches.

Weston-Webb said the company planned to destroy hundreds of thousands of the recalled chocolates later this week to ensure that there was no risk of contamination.

"It will be done in a safe and supervised way," he told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. "We just want to make sure we destroy them properly and safely."

Weston-Webb said he has not yet seen financial figures to show how badly the recall has affected the company, and that Mars and Snickers bars will only be returned to store shelves once the company is confident they are safe.

A total of four letters have been sent to the company's headquarters in the southern city of Ballarat containing threats against an unidentified company that is not related to MasterFoods. Police say they don't know why MasterFoods was targeted.

The first letter, received on June 8, contained a Snickers bar that was later found to be laced with a pesticide-like substance. *AP*

Pinochet loses immunity in rights case

SANTIAGO, Chile—A Chilean appeals court ruled by a narrow margin on Wednesday that former dictator Augusto Pinochet can face charges related to the 1975 cover-up of the killings of dozens of leftists, known as Operation Colombo.

PINOCHET

Judge Juan Escobar, president of the Santiago Appeals Court, told reporters that the court voted 11-10 to remove Pinochet's immunity from prosecution in the human rights case.

The defense for Pinochet, 89, is expected to appeal the ruling to the Supreme Court. Pinochet ruled Chile from 1973 to 1990, a period when more than 3,000 people died in political violence.

Judge Victor Montiglio, who is investigating and prosecuting the Operation Colombo case, wants to charge Pinochet with responsibility in covering up the murders of up to 119 political opponents including armed rebels from the Revolutionary Leftist Movement.

The cover-up involved planting news stories in Argentina and Brazil alleging that the guerrillas had died fighting among themselves.

Human rights lawyers say they were taken prisoner by Chile's secret police and killed.

"It was close, but we are happy with the decision to accept the prosecution's motion to remove immunity. If it is appealed, the Supreme Court should definitely uphold this ruling," said Hernan Quezada, a human rights attorney who represents families of the victims.

Chile has been ruled by a center-left coalition for 15 years, but up until recently public opinion on Pinochet was deeply divided. While many revile him, others admire what they say was his role in saving Chile from communism. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE PEDIATRIC SOCIETY, INC.
INFO BOX

How young can a child develop an allergy?
Allergy can occur at any age even very young infants, as in cowmilk allergy.

What can cause the allergy?
Allergy is an abnormal reaction to a substance that is usually considered harmless. These substances are called allergens. They could be in the form of inhalants like housedust mites, animal danders, ingestants like food or drug or even contactants like creams and lotions.

What are the signs and symptoms of allergy?
The signs and symptoms of allergy are varied. On the skin, one can have itchy rash (atopic dermatitis); in the lungs, one can have cough, difficulty in breathing, "wheezing" (asthma); in the nose, frequent sneezing, watery discharge, conjestion or itching; in the eyes, one can have redness and excessive tears.

Can allergy be life threatening?
Yes, while the allergic reactions are generally not dangerous, some are life threatening. This is exemplified by severe asthma or anaphylaxis. While other allergies are non-life threatening, the quality of life of allergic children may be affected.

My child has allergy to chicken and seafood. Can he outgrow it?
Some people do outgrow allergy. With regards to food, it depends on the kind of food and the severity of the reaction. In general, the least likely to be outgrown are reaction to sea food and nuts. The more severe the reaction, the less likely it is outgrown.

What are the signs and symptoms of cowmilk allergy?
Manifestations of cowmilk allergy could range from itchy rash, vomiting, diarrhea, colic, bloody stones, cough or wheezing and even failure to thrive a chronic cause.

My baby is being bottle-fed. He has been having skin rash on the cheeks and the scalp. Could it be he is allergic to his milk?
Yes, it is possible he has cowmilk allergy. If he is already on solid foods, it is also possible that they may be causing the rash. Consider also conditions like irritant dermatitis or contact dermatitis.

How do you differentiate atopic dermatitis(AD) from seborrheic dermatitis?
Atopic dermatitis usually occurs in allergy-prone families while genes do not seem to be involved in seborrheic dermatitis. In infants, the red, oozy or crusted rash of AD as found on the arms, legs, the face and the trunk areas that can be rubbed and scratched. Seborrheic dermatitis in infants is also known as cradle cap. Yellowish or brownish greasy scales sprout on the scalp, eyebrow and behind the ears.

My child has atopic dermatitis, will he develop asthma later on?
Many studies have shown that there is an increased risk for asthma and rhino conjunctivitis, or both in children who had atopic dermatitis at a very early age (before 3 months of age).

How does one acquire allergy? Is it from the environment or hereditary?
It can be both. Although allergies themselves are not inherited, the genetic predisposition to develop them is. Environment also plays a role. One must be exposed to an allergen in order to develop an allergy.

Is there first aid for hives?
You may give an oral antihistamine but the patient must be brought to the ER or any physician for further evaluation and management. Fast-acting injections are given for more severe cases.

My child often develops morning colds/ sneezing: Is this allergic rhinitis? Does he need any medication?
It could be allergic rhinitis. He may need medications like antihistamines but must still be brought to the physician for further evaluation and management.

Allergy ALERT!

Aksyon Iwas-Allergy!

An educational grant from UNILAB Consumer Health in celebration of World Allergy Day 8 July 2005

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OPINION

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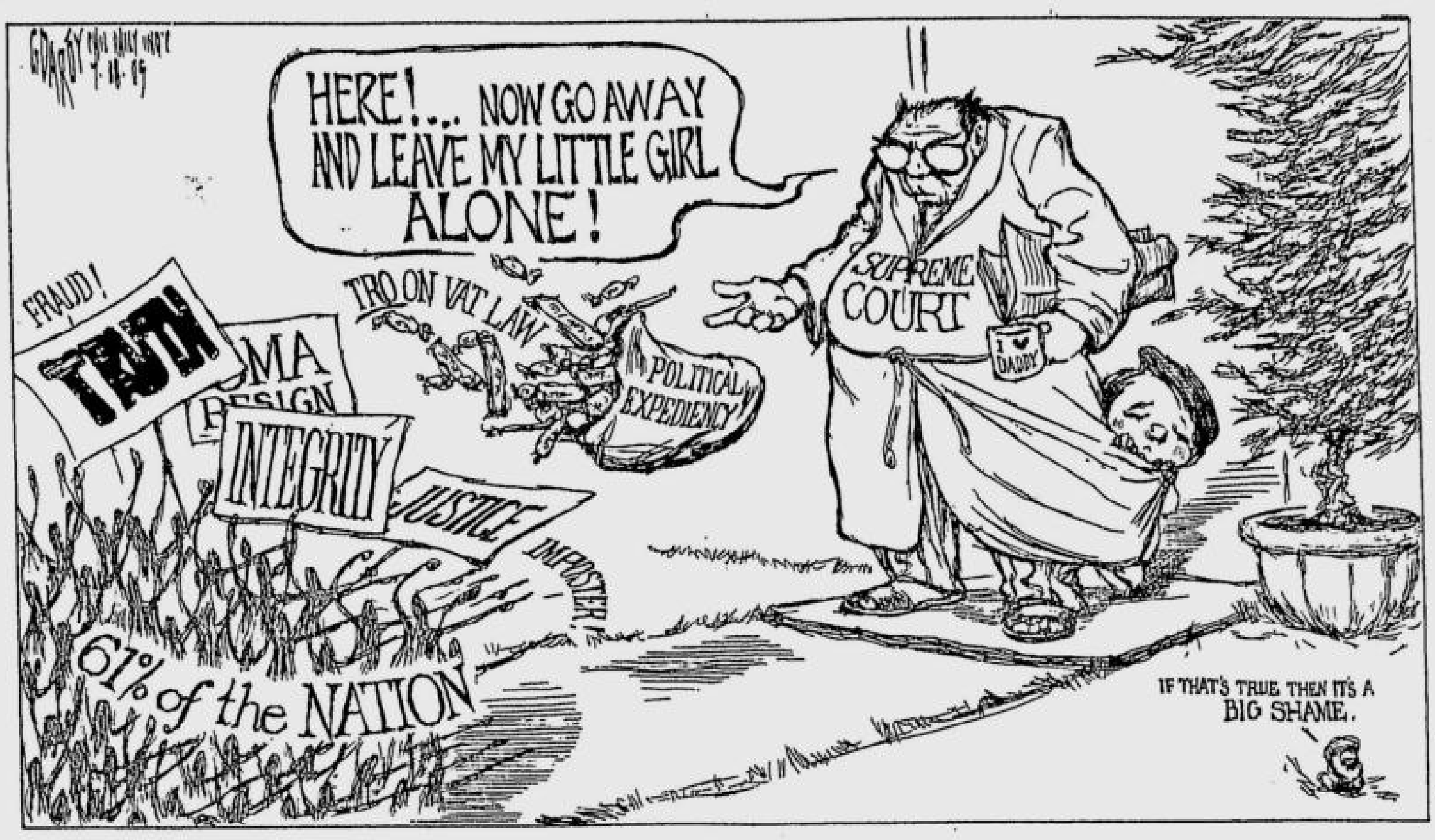

Missing link

Editorial

THE PARADE of witnesses before the House committees holding joint hearings has so far failed to include the man who should be front and center in the inquiry. Former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano has been notable for his absence, and general silence, punctured only by occasional, feisty statements as to his position. The fact is, of the two most controversial principals in the recorded conversations, only President Macapagal-Arroyo has been heard from. Garcillano still has to speak to the public, and much more importantly, be heard.

Whether or not Garcillano's statements will be predictable, since he has already telegraphed to the media his stand, is beside the point. He continues to be virtually unreachable, his location the subject of the most extreme speculations. His being a free agent is in doubt, and those doubts can only serve to put the President and the military in doubt. Neither the President nor the military deserve to be subjected to such doubts at this time.

At the very least, Garcillano is entitled to give his side to Congress and the country. The public deserves to know what exactly Garcillano will stand by as his version of the truth. Considering how the Commission on Elections has been tarnished and demoralized by recent revelations, he owes it to that institution of which he used to be a member to set the record straight.

To clear the air, the former commissioner also should inform the public what he has been up to during his long period of absence from the public eye. The question of his physical location, as we've said, has been a cause for a lot of speculations. It can either harm or help his case to explain who he has been meeting with, under what circumstances, and for what purpose.

There is, of course, the possibility that, holding so much information about so many political personages, both in the administration and the opposition, Garcillano could be keeping mum in the interest of both sides. This attitude does not help the country or the public's desire to clarify a confusing situation.

As things stand, all Garcillano has accomplished by talking on the phone to the INQUIRER is to increase the number of politicians who need to explain their conversations with him. The reaction of the opposition, and even the administration, indicates that Garcillano may be partially telling the truth or even telling the whole truth, in which case comes the question of whether the politicians issuing denials are themselves telling the whole truth. In other words, he has only increased public doubts and not increased public confidence.

The necessary reforms will be delayed until and unless our lawmakers and the public know exactly what improprieties or unethical practices, which may be legal at present but which should be made illegal, took place. We have already mentioned those necessary reforms earlier. And we should add that since Garcillano is no longer an election commissioner, a means must be found to hold him accountable for his actions. Due process must prevail, and part of due process is for the former commissioner to be given an opportunity to confront his accusers, and defend his reputation, such as it is.

We believe that public expectations are such that from the highest official in the land on down, there will be some sort of accounting for their actions. The nature of that accounting is what the public is trying to discern. Even the process by which this accounting should be undertaken is being debated. But all reasonable people realize that this must be done with the highest regard to individual and community rights and within the parameters of the law and the highest law, the Constitution.

Furthermore, it is not enough to be witnesses to the shortcomings of our officials, but to find ways to prevent opportunities for lapses in judgment or outright violations of ethics and the law. This process is independent of Congress. It is a process that must be undertaken by the people. The future, once more, must lie in the hands of the sovereign people, and not merely in the hands of our officials.

Kilosbayan speaks out on 'Gloriagate'

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

THE CALL made to the INQUIRER by former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to admit that he did talk on the phone with President Macapagal-Arroyo, like he did with members of the opposition, was obviously meant to bolster the argument that the President did no wrong in calling him during a crucial time in the elections. Opposition vice-presidential candidate Loren Legarda, House Minority Leader Francis Escudero, as well as administration Sen. Mar Roxas, among those mentioned by Garcillano, denied vehemently that they had talked to him. It is Garcillano's word against theirs.

If it is true that Legarda, Escudero and Roxas phoned Garci, why are their voices not on any of the wiretapped tapes of him talking with many persons? It was obviously Garci's phone that was tapped as even his very personal conversations with family members were recorded.

Even assuming that other politicians did call Garci, those are different from the President of the Philippines, a candidate in the elections, calling an election official, whom she had appointed, at a sensitive time when the votes were being counted and canvassed to talk about how her margin of votes could be increased.

Passages from the position paper of Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan trustees are very relevant:

"It is no valid excuse," said the paper, "that congressmen, senators, and other candidates for public office have also tried to influence the actuations of Comelec officials engaged in the counting and canvassing of votes.

"Assuming this could be true in many cases, we believe and maintain that: (1) one wrong does not justify another wrong; (2) other officials may cheat and lie, but the President of the land, who occupies the highest position within the gift of our people, is expected to be, first of all, honest, fair and truthful. In our view, more important than intellect is character; more important than competence is moral integrity; more important than industry is honest toil."

The paper said a few paragraphs earlier: "We have listened to the several versions of the tapes. We have carefully read the transcripts. The President did not merely converse with a mere Comelec official, she conversed—reportedly 15 times—with Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano at a crucial time when the Comelec, an independent body under...the Constitution, was in the process of performing its duty—counting and canvassing the votes after the May 10, 2004 presidential elections. Their conversation was not just to preserve her lead of one million votes in Cebu and Iloilo, it was a scheme to manipulate the votes in several places of Muslim Mindanao to help achieve the same end."

The paper continued:

"Political expediency to remain in power, not consecration of self to serve the nation has been GMA's style. We concede that high public officials cannot govern without entering into workable compromises. But there are two values that must never be compromised: truth and justice. The evidence shows that by entering into all sorts of morally indefensible compromises with those who are involved in graft and corruption and/or the plunder of the nation's wealth, the government has been unable to adhere to a system of justice with an orderly process of transparency and public accountability. Which explains why some honest, incorruptible public officials have resigned. Those who should be prosecuted are not only free but are also back in power, with their stolen wealth.

"GMA's legitimacy and title to the presidency are now in grave doubt because of the so-called 'Gloriagate tapes.' The jueteng pay-offs allegedly paid to her son, Rep. Juan Miguel 'Mikey' Arroyo, and the reported involvement of the First Gentleman in shady deals may be mitigated by their prolonged leave of absence or resignation from office, in the case of Mikey, and indefinite self-exile abroad, in the case of Mike Arroyo. But these may not be enough to stop the clamor for her resignation from the presidency, or by her eventual ouster through mass action, however unlikely at this point."

Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan also called for the immediate revamp of the Comelec because of the coming elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao this Aug. 8, only a month from now.

The two organizations had filed plunder and graft charges against all the commissioners of the Comelec, and the conspiring private individuals, the incorporators and directors of Mega Pacific e-Solutions Inc. for the "fraudulent award of the contract to supply automated counting machines (ACMs) that were to be used for the May 10, 2004 national elections." Until now, the Ombudsman has not decided on these cases.

The complaint alleged that Comelec withdrew from the Land Bank, its depository bank, the amount of P1.03 billion, which was supposed to be paid to MPEI. Actually, the true amount paid by the Comelec to MPEI for the ACMs, through the facilities of Metrobank, was only P550 million. What happened to the rest of the money?

"The purchase of 1,991 ACMs from Mega Pacific was saddled with immense kickbacks and horrendous overpricing," said Kilosbayan.

The Comelec award was nullified by the Supreme Court which directed the solicitor general to recover the P1.2 billion spent for the ACMs from the payees. The Ombudsman was specifically directed to determine the criminal liability of Comelec commissioners, their subordinates and their confederates in the private sector.

The tempting of the fed-up Filipino

Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

"RESPECT the Constitution!" seems to be the most politically acceptable slogan of the hour. Yet history shows that our legal system has time and again shown its ambivalence to extra-constitutional change and, each time, we as a people have reacted differently.

Marcos governed under the 1973 Constitution, which was approved by a mere show of hands when we were under martial law—woefully short of what the law required, namely, a proper plebiscite with appropriate safeguards. Yet the Supreme Court said, so what if it was illegal so long as the people have accepted the new Constitution? The sovereign people have spoken, who are we to stand in the way?

The Court asked: "If [the people] had risen up in arms and by force deposed the then existing government ..., there could not be the least doubt that their act would ... not be subject to judicial review .... We do not see [this] situation [to] be any different ..., if no force had been resorted to and the people, in defiance of the existing Constitution but peacefully ... ordained a new Constitution."

Until Marcos was ousted at Edsa I in 1986, the nation's liberals and democrats reviled this infamous decision as judicial capitulation, or in the polite language of the time, as too much "judicial statesmanship."

After Edsa I, however, the Court similarly invoked the "political question doctrine" to uphold Cory Aquino's government, but this time, the same liberals and democrats applauded with gusto. Cory promulgated her "Freedom Constitution," not by virtue of a plebiscite, but through the "direct exercise of the power of the Filipino people." The Supreme Court justices, all Cory appointees, found that she became president "in violation of the provisions of the 1973 Constitution as ... Mr. Marcos [had already been declared] the winner in the [snap] elections" and that her government was "revolutionary in the sense that it came into existence in defiance of existing legal processes"—but its legitimacy was "not a justiciable matter [but] belongs to the realm of politics where only the people ... are the judge."

Constitutionalism faced its next challenge at Edsa II, where people power ousted a genuinely elected president, Joseph Estrada. Then Vice President Macapagal-Arroyo could take over only in case of his death, permanent disability, removal via impeachment, or resignation. But Erap was alive, able, not impeached, and had not resigned. The Court could have taken the path of least resistance and invoked the political question doctrine, exactly the way it did in the earlier cases. Or, the Court could have institutionalized people power unabashedly, and said that Erap was "incapacited," not by sickness but by induced political paralysis through "withdrawal of support" by various centers of power in government, including the military and civil society.

But no, the Court held that, unlike Cory who was candid about the extra-constitutional character of her government, GMA had assumed office snugly under the present Constitution. Thus, the rather creative version that Erap had "constructively resigned" based not on his resignation letter but on the Angara diaries. Most telling however were the warnings by the other justices about the "hooting throng," the "innate perils of people power," and their "disquietude [that] the use of 'people power' ['an amorphous ... concept'] to create a vacancy in the presidency [can very well] encourag[e] People Power Three, People Power Four, and People Power ad infinitum."

I cited all these in a May 2001 lecture for the Supreme Court's Centennial, but I could not have imagined we would face the power of this prophecy so soon with GMA's June 2005 "apology."

All the Sunday front pages in the major dailies showed wonderful photos of a reflective Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, suffused in soft lighting in just the right hues and in the quiet of her study, doing what we all had longed for her to do: sit down and use her God-given talents to solve our country's problems. Her campaigners had denigrated her opponent as a high school dropout, and exalted her Ph.D. in Economics. If you voted for her because of her superior brains, congratulations; on Sunday, she finally sat down to use them.

Until then, she was content with photo ops, attending prayer rallies here, distributing goodies there. Government policies sounded fine on paper, but were hostage to politics in practice, negotiable at every turn, to pay for every political debt, or assuage each passing *tampo* by some loyal *trapo*. And, as the Garci tapes reveal, no government office was too sacred for her will to power.

The Comelec is an independent constitutional body, yet "Garci" could speak to "Ma'am" about rigging the vote ("*yung pinadagdagan ninyo*"). The Constitution speaks of a "professional" armed forces "insulated from politics," yet the tapes reveal names of officers made to act like faithful Mafia capos. Ah, yes, and that "*dukut*" operation to prevent a witnesses from testifying—that's straight from "The Godfather." Talk about devils quoting Scripture.

What exactly does the Rule of Law mean? It doesn't mean the mechanical application of rules. Rather it means governance through accountable institutions that can be held to respect our fundamental rights, including the sanctity of our vote. Uphold the Constitution, by all means, but don't use it as a refuge for waffling and fence-sitting. Uphold constitutionalism, by all means, just make sure you seize not upon "the letter that killeth but [upon] the spirit that giveth life."

* * *

Comments to raulcp@zpdee.net

GMA's survival depends on three strategic sectors

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE FATE of the beleaguered government of President Macapagal-Arroyo hangs on the balance as the Philippine Catholic Church hierarchy begins this weekend to examine its position on whether to throw its weight behind the movement seeking the immediate resignation of the President.

Forces clamoring for the President's resignation have stepped up the tempo of their campaign, but their failure so far to mobilize a mass base for street action has sent the crisis of confidence over Ms Arroyo's leadership to a stalemate that has pushed the country toward economic paralysis.

With few visible signs of a groundswell to back the campaign, an anxious nation now focuses its attention on how much support the administration will receive from three critical sectors which provide the foundations for regime stability and survival: the Church, the business community and the military.

Without the crowds pouring out in the streets on the scale that propelled People Power I and II, the prospects of regime opponents in toppling the Arroyo administration now depend less on people-power manifestations and more on which way these three institutions will go. A withdrawal of support from the government by any of these strategic sectors could set off a domino effect that could precipitate the collapse of the regime.

That's why the weekend retreat of bishops, who are now deeply divided over whether the hierarchy would cast its lot with the tendency seeking to intensify pressure on the President to step down or that seeking to drive the unrest to the arena of constitutional remedies is very crucial to the regime's survival.

The moderate wing is associated with the call for restraint against extra-constitutional solutions from Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, who warned in a pastoral letter last July 1 against tendencies espoused by some bishops seeking extra-constitutional means, such as inciting another people power movement to oust the President. Rosales made it emphatically clear that the Church should reject violence as the mode to resolve the impasse, saying that "any proposed solution ... that relies on, or leads to, violence is unacceptable."

As the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, composed of 81 active and 24 retired bishops, goes into the plenary meeting on July 9-10, the leadership of Rosales as the preeminent prelate of the Philippine Church will be put to a test.

The dilemma of the Church was defined by Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez of Caloocan, who said the conference faced three alternative courses of action: "impeachment" of the President, if evidence warrants, status quo or resignation. He said these were the "three perceptions" that had emerged from informal discussions of the bishops.

A CBCP source told the press that the conference was expected to formulate a "unified stand." The search for a unified stand underlined fears in the hierarchy that unless it takes a unified position, the Church's moral influence in resolving the crisis would be weakened.

The bishops are coming to grips with the issue of their disunity and lack of a towering leadership, following the death of Jaime Cardinal Sin. The Arroyo government's crisis has polarized the CBCP into two streams, with one seeking to settle the conflict in the streets and the other seeking to drive it into constitutional channels.

Because of the pivotal role of the Church in the people-power upheavals that toppled two governments, the decision of the CBCP and its capacity to close ranks and speak with one authoritative voice are being closely watched by the two other strategic sectors—the business community and the military. Also watching is the large inert body of civil society that has remained unresponsive so far to calls for stepped-up street action from a noisy minority, claiming to reflect the "overwhelming" demand of the people for the President's immediate resignation. The bishops' decision could give momentum to the street campaign demanding the President's resignation or deflect the unrest to the legal framework.

Because the street-action option has so far failed to gather the critical mass that could force the President to resign, withdrawal of support by strategic sectors has increasingly become attractive as an alternative approach to bring about the fall of the government.

The fall of the Estrada government in 2001 bolsters the argument that when the Church, the business community and the military withdraw support from government, it could topple the government. In the final weeks of the Estrada government, the Church and the Makati business community stopped lending their support to the regime. The mass movements in the streets came later, following the desertion of business and the Church, weakening the government's main pillars of support. This was followed by the defections of half of the Cabinet, which gave the cue for the withdrawal of support by the military. The final blow came when the general staff defected after it witnessed the streets flooded by people angered by the closure of the second envelope in the impeachment trial of Estrada.

At present, the business sector is holding ranks behind the Arroyo government, although businessmen are nervous about the political unrest and the setback suffered by the government's fiscal reform program, following the suspension by the Supreme Court of the expanded value-added tax. The Church has remained fragmented. By the weekend, we will know whether the bishops' decisions would be the catalyst of survival or collapse of the Arroyo government.

From schoolteacher to global trainer

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FOR "prophets of doom" who say the call center industry is nothing but a dead-end for the Philippine economy, Malu Ros provides an antidote of optimism. And for the thousands of Filipinos working at the various call centers in Metro Manila and other urban centers, she provides not just a role model but a career goal, too.

Currently director for Global Communication and Culture for Convergys, the market leader in the global call center industry, Ros is living proof for their mostly young employees that, as she puts it, "there is a future for them in Convergys." Ros cites the case of one employee, who joined Convergys at age 43 as an agent (as those who take customer calls are called), and who, eight years later, now works as a director for the company.

As employers go, Convergys is not a bad prospect. It chalked up $2.5 billion in revenues last year, and currently employs more than 66,000 agents deployed in 60 countries and operating in 30 languages. In Asia, Convergys has set up operations in India and the Philippines. It's a relatively new presence in the country, having set up shop only in April 2003, but growing at a dizzying pace since. Being "employee Number 3" in the Philippines, Ros is in a position to measure and appreciate how much local operations have grown.

"Our goal was to have 2,000 employees by 2004," she recalls. "Today we have 5,600 and growing."

Now based in Jacksonville, Florida, where the Convergys training "campus" is located (the company headquarters are in Cincinnati, Ohio), Ros provides inspiration not just for Convergys' local employees and all those working in the field, but for all young women as well who should find her story illustrative of what can happen when one is ever ready to pick up and respond to life's challenges.

* * *

"I WAS a child bride!" she says, laughing softly and recalling her marriage, at the age of 18, to her first husband. He was a military man who had been the CAT "commandant" at her high school in Cebu when she was the corps commander. "But he waited until I was in college before he courted me," she is quick to clarify. Even after she had her first child, she still pursued a college education, graduating with honors with a BA in English from Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepcion.

Ros then settled into married life, teaching English for seven years at the Sacred Heart High School for Boys. Her world turned upside down, however, when her husband died suddenly, leaving her a young widow with two small children to support. By then, she was already taking her master's in Literature at the Ateneo de Manila University and decided to take up the university's offer of a teaching position at the high school department.

A second marriage, which ended in annulment (Ros is her maiden name), produced a "second set" of two children. In between, since leaving academe, Ros has done consulting work not just on language training but also human resource development for, most prominently, the World Health Organization (WHO) for which she conducted language and leadership training for governments around Asia.

"It was the prospect of generating employment for our country," says Ros, that convinced her to accept the offer of Convergys to join them as a senior manager in 2003. A year later, she was asked to take over the global "CCT" operations and moved to Jacksonville.

* * *

THOUGH as communications and culture director Ros is primarily concerned with English training for agents, starting with those in India and the Philippines, she says she hopes to inculcate not just language skills but also "listening skills, critical thinking and comprehension, product knowledge and cross-cultural understanding" among the trainees.

She is quick to disabuse us of the notion that Convergys wishes to hire only young people from exclusive schools and colleges who can boast of an American "twang." "In fact, what we want to do is to neutralize their accents," she notes.

Convergys sets no limits as to the age, gender or experience of applicants, adds Ros, adding that they have taken in middle-age employees and executives who have been laid-off or taken early retirement, and even inexperienced housewives. "I am especially proud of my trainers," Ros reveals. Among them are a former broadcast executive, theater figures, ESL or "English as second language" teachers, speech and communications graduates, and yes, even a housewife.

As for the alleged bias for elitist school graduates, Ros points out that Convergys has set up a recruitment office in Manila's university belt where applicants can simply walk in. They have also set up a center in Cebu, aside from the six centers in Metro Manila.

* * *

"FLUENCY in English" is what she and other human resource people look for in new hires, says Ros. "It's not the accent we're particular about, but how comfortable the person is in using English."

To this end, given what she says is Convergys' growing need for more agents, Ros has been giving workshops for public high school teachers on teaching "functional" English. It's not just a matter of teaching grammar and comprehension, Ros points out, but also of enabling students "to function in the language, to use English to persuade, to agree and disagree."

Filipinos, says Ros, have an edge in that we are "very trainable" and have "innate customer service skills." It also helps that exposure to American culture has made Filipino agents familiar not just with the nuances of American English idiom, but also with cultural references and even humor.

"Our young people are looking for role models," says Ros, without realizing perhaps that she herself makes for one compelling role model and not just for aspiring call center employees.

Massacre in Manila

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

PEOPLE today are complaining about a new strain of flu and colds that take longer than usual to heal. Worse, these bugs render their victims nearly useless at the height of the infection. There are many diseases going around these days, like AIDS or cancer or tuberculosis, but there have not been enough cases recorded or any outbreak of epidemic proportions to make people panic.

In Gregorio Zaide's 15-volume compilation, "Documentary Sources of Philippine History," are three eyewitness accounts of the cholera epidemic that hit Manila in 1820. One is by a French doctor, Paul de la Gironiere, another by Pierre Dobell, an American trader who served as the first Imperial Russian Consul in Manila, and the third by British Naval Commander Campbell who was in Manila at the time.

Cholera hit the Philippines quite often in the 19th and early 20th centuries. We have much enough documentary material on the subject to fill a doctoral dissertation. In Rizal's correspondence, we read about an epidemic that really cut down Calamba. From the letters of Rizal's sisters, we know how their relatives, neighbors and friends were dying left and right. Descriptions of the symptoms of both cholera and beri-beri were sent to Rizal who was then abroad studying medicine. One interesting note to all this was the appearance of a comet (perhaps Halley's comet) that was seen in the Philippines a number of nights, and which people believed was the omen of death and disaster.

The cholera epidemic of 1820 was the same as any other epidemic in Philippine history, except for the panic that led to the massacre by Filipinos of all foreigners, meaning Caucasians who were not Spanish or Portuguese. There were some French scientists in the country at the time who were collecting water samples from the Pasig River, and when the cholera epidemic exploded in October 1820, the rumor spread that the Frenchmen were actually saboteurs who put poison in the Pasig and all the wells and water sources as far as Laguna de Bay. Hardest hit by the disease were the Filipinos who started to wonder why the Spaniards and other Europeans were not affected. This fueled the rumor about poison in the water. As a matter of fact, the French offered medical assistance, which was later rejected when the rumor spread that they were administering poison to the sick in a bid to rid the country of all Tagalogs.

Dobell wrote: "On October 9, 1820 around 10 or 11 in the morning, a mob of about 3,000 men all armed with pikes, knives and bludgeons, proceeded cooly and deliberately to plunder and massacre all the strangers [that is, foreigners] on whom they could lay their hands ... The authorities were vainly implored for assistance. They came, it is true, with the troops, but it was only to behold with sangfroid the horrid spectacle. Not a musket was fired to save the lives of those unfortunate and defenseless [foreigners], who to the number of 39 were plundered and cruelly massacred; so many of them were so cut up and mangled that it was impossible to recognize them. As most of them were Roman Catholics, they were all collected and thrown into a hole together without the shadow of a ceremony or a stone to mark their graves! What is worse, the last acts from there down to the 9th of November mention that not a Spanish life was lost, nor has a single native as yet suffered punishment for this atrocious and horrible deed."

What makes this story quite intriguing was that the attack was basically on foreigners living in the city, most of them businessmen and their families. Chinese were also killed, their shops and homes looted.

Looking at all this today makes me wonder why this came about. What were the socio-economic conditions at the time that encouraged such behavior? If the intent was to get even or even stop the foreigners from allegedly spreading the disease, why was there a lot of looting? How come the Spaniards were spared? How come the police and the army did not lift a finger to stop this wanton murder?

There is something else in this story lying beneath the surface of the cholera epidemic and the massacre. Was this a ploy to keep foreign business out of the Spanish colony? Were specific people actually the target of this attack and the rest, as we would say today, just "collateral damage" or innocent bystanders caught in the crossfire? Perhaps it would be useful to dig up more than these foreigners' accounts and try to find a Spanish or even Filipino eyewitness and get a different version of the story. Surely, there must be documents on this event lying around in archives here and abroad. They would make an engaging read.

For those interested in one detailed, but rather self-serving, account of the events of October 1820, there is the book by Paul de la Gironiere, "Twenty Years in the Philippines," translated from the original French and first published in London in 1854, which has been reprinted in Manila twice or thrice and is readily available in libraries with a good Filipiniana collection. Gironiere mentions how he saved someone by hitting a man with his cane, and how he was saved by a Filipino whose wife he had treated for free. *Utang ng loob* in action here, but that is another story.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Broadband's bounties

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

I STILL remember how enthralled I was the first time I did e-mail. I was totally awed to learn the modem was connecting at what then seemed to be a supersonic speed of 2,400 bits per second.

Today, a phone connection can go as high as 56,000 bits per second, but that's still a snail's pace compared to broadband or high-speed Internet, where you can get speeds of between 384,000 and 3,000,000 bits per second.

For about two years now, I've had tantalizing tastes of these high-speed connections in hotels and airports overseas and at the University of the Philippines (yes, our university has broadband!). But I've resisted the temptation to get on this high-speed bandwagon at home, partly because of the cost (the cheapest monthly subscription is P1,500) and also because of principles. Zen practitioners would murmur, "*Mu*...", which is the Japanese word for "none," signifying a detachment from self, from the world, from the fixation over speed.

Got mail?

Alas for my *mu* principles, I finally succumbed about two months ago because (and I'm not rationalizing) my work involves a lot of e-mail—at least 50 a day, many with large attachments. To give one example, last week a science journal sent me a 38-page article for review, while the other day I received several research questionnaires to comment on.

Some readers know what it's like receiving these huge files on a regular phone connection. You spend half an hour downloading an extra large attachment and just as you are about to get the complete document, the phone connection goes kaput. "Shoot me!" you protest because you have to start all over again. And as long as you don't download the document, you run the danger of clogging up your box, with the consequence that other e-mail can't come in and people writing you may get a message saying, "Mailbox full." Broadband helps you unclog your electronic mailbox faster and without tying up your phone line because it uses a separate cable.

Mind you, in this age of high-speed Internet, people do tend to be indiscriminate with what they send. You'll find yourself getting more and more unsolicited photographs of friends in various stages of inebriation. So, remember the Golden Broadband Rule: Don't e-mail others what you don't want them to e-mail you.

Minor aggravations aside, broadband does offer many bounties. I'm going to describe some of them, but keep in mind that my biases are those of a nerd—I don't have links for downloading rap music, or movies, or games.

Streaming in the world

The best part of high-speed Internet is getting to tune into the world, that is, listening to radio stations, which you can't do with dial-up connections.

PLDT's broadband still has bugs, sometimes conking out for a few hours, but when it's working, it allows you to stream in the world's radio stations. Just tuning into the British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) makes broadband worthwhile. Visit bbc.co.uk/radio to get an initial menu of stations. Click on BBC World Service for excellent coverage of international issues. The other stations are more oriented toward listeners in Britain but has good international content. Radio 3's content, for example, is described as "classical, jazz, world arts, drama" while Radio 4 features "intelligent speech," meaning talk shows and documentary features, all generally lively and with substantial content. For example, they have a weekly program, called "The Moral Maze," where theologians, ethicists and health professionals tackle pressing ethical issues around life and death.

BBC does the world a great service by archiving many of its programs, meaning you don't have to catch it as it is being broadcast. You can click any time to get the most recent broadcasts of a particular show and listen at your own pace, pausing or jumping ahead, or even taping the program.

For the view from across the Atlantic, use your broadband to get National Public Radio (www.npr.org) which offers news about the United States and the world that you won't get on CNN or sub-intelligent Fox. NPR's liberal views got them into trouble recently, as conservative members of the US Congress attempted to slash its budget. Fortunately, NPR is also supported by communities, and listeners were able to protest and block the conservatives.

Downloading Rizal

Broadband isn't just for listening to radio stations. I often think of the Internet as a virtual neighborhood of bookstores and libraries. Broadband allows you to run around the neighborhood, browsing through thousands of shelves and, best of all, actually taking out some of the books.

Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.com) is the most amazing of these online libraries. Working on donations and volunteer time, they've transformed 16,000 books, whose copyrights have expired, into electronic files that you can download for free.

To mark the 400th anniversary of the publication of Miguel de Cervantes' "Don Quixote," I downloaded electronic files of the original Spanish version, an English translation and a special 19th-century edition featuring illustrations by Gustave Dore. All done in about half an hour on broadband.

Then I found and downloaded two anthropology books: one on the Bontoc Igorot and the other on the Tingguian of Abra, both written in the early part of the 20th century.

Gutenberg also has several Tagalog books. I picked out a copy of "Doctrina Cristiana," which was the first book printed in the Philippines, and Balagtas' "Florante at Laura."

On their online catalogue, a search on "Rizal" produced a fairly good list, including the full text of Charles Derbyshire's English translations of Rizal's two novels and the original Spanish version of "The Philippines: A Century Hence."

I nearly fell off my virtual surfboard when I found out Gutenberg had parts of Blair and Robertson's "The Philippine Islands," a monumental compilation of Spanish accounts about the Philippines from 1493 to 1898. The original books cost thousands of pesos, if you can find them. And a few years back, the Bank of the Philippine Islands put the books on CD and sold them for P1,500 each (I'm not sure if you can still get them).

Nope, I haven't downloaded the Gutenberg versions of Blair and Robertson because there are only 21 of the 55 volumes available. (Thank you, thank you to whoever's been transforming these classics into electronic books.)

Again, a friendly Zen reminder for broadband: "*Mu*, don't take more than what you can handle. And be selective."

Which is why, so far, I've resisted the temptation to download the electronic versions of the Gloriagate tapes and transcripts from the INQUIRER site (www.inq7.net) and from the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (pcij.org/blog/?p=108).

You'll need broadband to download those huge files, but for mortals still using dial-up connections, don't feel too bad: the PCIJ site has small files you can download in the form of 32—yes sir, yes ma'am, 32—ringtone variations of "Hello, Garci" and other presidential lapses.

The INQUIRER is a member of the
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The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

Walking 2 miles to return a penny

ANCIENT wisdom offers this advice—a simple yet profound formula to guide everyone who leads, anyone who aspires to leadership: "Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly."

Warren Bennis said, "Managers do things right. Leaders do the right thing."

As you make your choices and create your style, remember your power and influence. For your people will mirror and adopt your commitments as they see you living them. They will be like the little boy following his father on a climb up a steep mountain who said, "Be careful, Daddy. I'm walking in your footsteps."

When you do justly, you forge the right path for everyone to follow.

The story is told that when Abraham Lincoln was a little boy, he was a clerk in a small store. One day, when he realized that he had overcharged a customer, he walked 2 miles through the snow to immediately return the overcharge—one penny!

Do justly, President Macapagal-Arroyo. Return to the Filipinos what you overcharged, nay stole: The presidency of the Republic of the Philippines!

(Passages lifted from Rabbi Wayne Dosick's book, "The Business Bible.")

—ROLANDO B. TEVES,
Unit 3E Jojemar Building,
344 Maysilo Circle, Mandaluyong City

No one will storm Malacañang to install Noli

GLORIA Macapagal-Arroyo will remain President of our country and survive this crisis, notwithstanding calls for her ouster and resignation.

The "Hello Garci" tapes will peak in popularity, perhaps for a few more weeks, and then die a natural death when everyone starts losing interest in them and as their novelty wears out.

The *jueteng* scandal will suffer a similar fate. The investigation being conducted by Congress, rather than coming out with hard facts, has just shown the Filipino people how to waste so much resources over nothing. It's so frustrating listening to the hearings that one is almost tempted to ask for the abolition of Congress rather than jueteng.

Furthermore, neither the middle class nor the poor is clamoring for GMA's ouster. All they wanted was for GMA to break her silence which she has done. No one will storm Malacañang simply to install Noli de Castro as president.

In the meantime, all these investigations "in aid of legislation" are such a drain on our economy that it should come as no surprise if everyone, especially the poor, ends up even poorer by this experience.

Let's just move forward and do our utmost to help our country and fellowmen, and we may succeed yet in building a better nation, not because of, but in spite of the government.

—ANTONIO C. PASTELERO,
Philippine Stock Exchange Center,
Exchange Road,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

Right but wrong

CAN you blame the Israelis for hating Ambassador Antonio Modena?

It is just right for any Filipino citizen to fight for the right of his countrymen especially if the "*kababayans*" are being maltreated and the problem is not addressed even if it has been reported to the government concerned.

But the good ambassador, Modena, should have realized that he's not a journalist in Israel but a diplomat; and he should not have uttered those perceived "foul words," more so to the Jews.

Even us Filipinos react every time foreign nationals, especially diplomats, make undiplomatic remarks about our nationals or our country. Have we forgotten how some of us reacted to the statement of US Chargé d'affaires Joseph Mussomelli?

—ERICK SAN JUAN,
S-1402 1st Bank Tower, Makati City

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On Susan Roces

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

Cory Aquino calls for people power when it suits her and her family. She did not like President Joseph Estrada so, of course, people power had to be used against him. And since Susan Roces-Poe is somehow allied with Estrada, of course, we should not have people power for the sake of the country. I am not surprised by her actions and by her messages. She is a snob and regards Susan Roces as not of her class. But I think Susan Roces is a more classy lady than Aquino will ever be.—**Sandra Torres, Mango Avenue, Cebu City**

* * *

Susan, try to be realistic. What do you know about politics? Good governance, I think, is achieved by a combination of different factors like an in-depth knowledge of the Constitution and the law, the ability to establish good foreign and international relationships, the ability to assert authority and make critical decisions, humanitarianism, an ability to lead the country with honesty, integrity and dignity and be a role model and set a good example for everyone.

While there is no question or doubt that you are one honest individual who has dignity and integrity worthy of admiration, these are not enough to make you an ideal president to lead the country and try to solve problems already plaguing the country.

What if there is a summit meeting or conference with other world leaders, would you be confident enough to relate to them on your own? No one knows better than you your limitations, so please don't try to stretch them far beyond your capability.

What you can do is just support the ideal politician who you think will be able to achieve your vision for the nation. You don't want to become the individual who will be doing the Philippines' top job by virtue of the sympathy you well deserve because of your late husband's fate. While it is a common trait among Filipinos to be sympathetic and to always go for the underdog, the presidency you seem to be eyeing is a very critical and sensitive post. We don't need to be emotional on this case. We need to be right at all times. Only through this, perhaps, can we Filipinos live decent lives.

So please, please, please, for the love of God and country, try to think as many times as you can, before deciding to seek the presidency.—**Gardie Santos, Melbourne, Victoria 3171, Australia**

* * *

OK, let's say President Macapagal-Arroyo gives in. Who will they put as her replacement, Susan Roces? Rez Cortez? Tito Sotto? I have nothing personal against these people, but does the opposition think they can deliver? I am not an Arroyo supporter nor an opposition supporter, I am just concerned for my country. The Philippines' future is so bleak, its condition is getting worse, and only a good president can make the country roll again. The question is, who?—**Greg Favorito, 14335 Merced Avenue, Baldwin Park, CA USA**

* * *

Susan Roces in her speech was like a child crying because she lost a toy. Remember that if there was cheating (but I believe there was none) during the last election, it was for the good of the country. We were lucky that Fernando Poe Jr. was not elected. It is a shame that with all our graduates from good universities, we could not find a qualified politician to run for president. Instead, we had a high school dropout who could hardly speak English. Are the people of the Philippines insane?—**Raul Ratunil, 4449 Boyar Ave. L.B, CA 90807**

* * *

Eddie Villanueva and the other anti-government protesters said that the Filipino people are mature enough to decide who their leader would be. Ironic, isn't it? Look at the people who are leading the protests right now: a Marcos daughter, an Estrada son, and the cronies of former corrupt presidents.

Mature? You are trying to force a duly elected official out of office. Mature? You have no idea who will lead the country. Mature? You say, make Susan Roces our new leader. She has no experience at all in politics. She herself said that she doesn't want the position. What do you think will happen to our already poor country if someone like Roces becomes the president? Will she have the respect of other countries that can help improve our economic situation? Will she know how to govern without "vultures and scavengers" by her side just waiting to use her? I hope that these people have plans on how to make the country better rather than force out the current administration and just hope for the best. If you really love our country, support the Constitution. It is the only right and moral way. Anarchy is never a part of democracy.—**Ted Oniate, West-Chester Ohio, USA**

* * *

Pang-Famas *ang* speech *ni* Susan Roces. *Dito sa* America *pinagtatawanan lang siya.*—**Bing Gabriel, 11 Civic Center Drive, 12 East Brunswick, New Jersey, USA**

* * *

Susan Roces is so funny! She is really an actress, the best actress of the Philippine movie industry. Sorry to say that she is not capable of becoming the Philippine president.—**Marilyn Coronel, 63 Smith St., Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621**

* * *

I would like to react to Susan Roces' statement. She called President Macapagal-Arroyo arrogant but look who's talking. She's more arrogant. She doesn't even know the laws of the land. Yes, Ms Arroyo admitted that she spoke with a Comelec (Commission on Elections) official, but she did not admit that she cheated in the last election. Let's follow what the Constitution provides.—**Enrico Navea, 74 Victory Avenue, Quezon City**

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Vice mayor killed; town cops axed

AQUINO

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

MAPANDAN, Pangasinan—Vice Mayor Rodolfo Aquino had just come from a session of the local council and was talking to some people here on Wednesday night when a man approached and shot him in the head and body.

Aquino, 56, a member of the Bayan Muna party-list group, died before reaching the Mapandan Community Hospital at about 6:45 p.m.

His driver and bodyguard, Victor Villanueva, tried to grab the suspect's gun but he too was shot in the chest. Villanueva died while undergoing surgery at the Region I Medical Center in Dagupan City at 8 p.m.

The attack happened a few meters from the town's police station.

Director General Arturo Lomibao, Philippine National Police chief, went to this town on Thursday and formed the Task Force Aquino to investigate the murder.

He ordered the task force, headed by Supt. Edgar Basbas, deputy provincial police director, to submit a report in three days.

Lomibao also relieved Chief Insp. Reynaldo Tamondong, town police chief, and the entire police force on Thursday "because the incident happened just a few meters from the police station."

The PNP chief also relieved the 22 policemen in the town "to allay fears that the investigation will be influenced by people in the [local] police."

Tamondong will be replaced by Chief Insp. Efren Serenilla, group director of the 107th provincial mobile group based in Tayug town.

Lomibao said the town's 22 policemen would be retrained for two weeks.

"This incident is deplorable in a peaceful town like Mapandan," he said.

He asked residents to give the police any information that could lead to the arrest of the suspect.

"The police are looking at all angles. We do not want to conclude at this point [so we are looking] at all angles and all motives that could possibly lead to solution of the case," Lomibao said.

After shooting Aquino and his driver, the suspect, who was said to be between 25 and 30 years old, ran to the cemetery. Aquino's brother, Dabbey, tried to chase him but the suspect shot but missed him.

Mayor Ferdinand Calimlim asked his townmates to be calm following the killing.

PDI correspondent 'persona non grata'

LUCENA CITY—For allegedly uttering defamatory words and showing disrespect to Batangas Gov. Armando Sanches during an interview on Monday, INQUIRER correspondent Mei Magsino-Lubis has been declared *persona non grata* by the province's mayor's league.

In a resolution dated July 5, the 15 municipal mayors who signed the resolution called Lubis' acts in the interview unbecoming of a journalist.

According to Sanchez in his affidavit, Lubis shouted the words: "I suggest governor that you go back to Grade One and learn good manners and right conduct. *Bumalik ka sa nanay mo*," after he ended the interview with the INQUIRER correspondent.

"I felt utterly humiliated. I was shocked and embarrassed beyond words. If she had no respect to my person, she could have at least shown respect for the office of the governor," Sanchez said.

However, Lubis vehemently denied Sanchez's allegation. On the contrary, she said it was Sanchez who shouted invectives at her.

"He shouted so many invectives and cursed all over the place that I packed my notebook into my bag and stood up. I told him '*kung sa tingin nya pinipersonal ko ito, bahala siya basta ako, trabaho lang. Sana naman intindihin nya yung binabasa niya*,'" Lubis said.

She added: "Sanchez was already shouting at me, despite my low voice telling him to please don't say those words to me. I told him that I came in his office upon his invitation through provincial legal officer Minerva Dimaano and I expected to be treated like an invited guest, and not treated as harshly as that." *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Mayor denies 'jueteng'

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Mayor Ernesto Castañeda said this capital town has been jueteng-free for several months now. Castañeda said the numbers game played here is the government-run "EZ 2," which is based on the winning numbers of lotto. "To say that there is *jueteng* in Lingayen is giving the town a bad reputation, especially because it is [the] capital town of Pangasinan and it is where the provincial police headquarters are located," he said. He said he issued the clarification after the INQUIRER reported on July 2 that illegal gambling was "alive in Lingayen." *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Traders appeal to LTO

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Businessmen here have asked the Land Transportation Office to allow motorists arrested for traffic violations on the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) to redeem their licenses from the place where they were arrested, instead of going to the LTO central office in Quezon City. In a letter to LTO chief Anne Lontoc, the Pampanga Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PamCham) said it was impractical, too costly and too inconvenient for motorists in this province to travel to Quezon City just to redeem their confiscated licenses. PamCham president Levy Laus said motorists, mostly those arrested for violating the speed limit, should be given an option to redeem their licenses from other LTO branches in Central Luzon. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Tricycle ban sought

SAGADA, Mt. Province—Tourists and residents have asked officials to reject a proposal to ban tricycles in this tourist town to prevent pollution. Councilor Dave Gulian said the proposed entry of tricycles would congest traffic and would cause noise and air pollution. Members of Sagada Environmental Guides Association and Sagada Operators and Drivers Association said the move would affect Sagada's natural beauty. Residents from eastern and southern parts of Sagada, however, said they agreed to the use of tricycles because these are cheaper and practical transportation means.
Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Coco lumber seized

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—After seizing a truckload of illegally cut coconut lumber last Friday, elements of the police Regional Mobile Group (RMG) in Calabarzon intercepted a 10-wheel truck containing 12,000 board feet of undocumented coconut logs along the South Luzon Expressway on Sunday. Supt. Alberto Supapo, RMG-Calabarzon director, said the logs were seized in a police checkpoint in Barangay Mayapa, Calamba City at around 3:30 a.m.
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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AN APPEAL FOR THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH TO SAVE OUR NATION

(Statement of the University of Santo Tomas)

The Filipino nation stands again at the crossroads, unable to march forward as she is held back by division and discord. The controversies hounding the very legitimacy of the presidency and other political scandals come at a very sensitive moment when the nation is being besieged by the high regime of world oil prices and other economic woes. Surely the nation does not need the crippling political crises to aggravate the poverty of the general majority of the people.

The crisis needs to be resolved quickly and effectively or else the nation will continue to hemorrhage, probably beyond reparation. All Filipinos of faith and goodwill must work together to save the nation.

At the heart of the crisis is evasion of the truth. The carefully worded confession of the President owning to a "lapse in judgment," the inter-committee congressional inquiry on alleged wire-tapped conversation purportedly between the President and an election official, the proliferation of the conversations through electronic means, some media reportage and commentaries - all of these seem to be working towards *evading* rather than *revealing* the truth. They amount to nothing but shadow play, with the truth cast in ever darkening pallor.

Certainly there is a need to establish the truth outside the pale of shadowy players. The truth has been held hostage by those whose interest is to score political points at the expense of the larger national interest. The truth is being used at the service of falsehood. "What can be made clean by the unclean? And what truth can come from that which is false?" [Ecclesiastes 24:4]

There is a need, therefore, to depoliticize the truth and truth-seeking. *As such, we call for the establishment of a Truth Commission by non-partisan sectors* enjoying general social acceptance such as the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, religious sector, the academe, business, and NGOs. It will be the task of the Commission to ferret out the truth, establish culpability, and impose sanctions and restitution. The political branches of the government — the Executive and the Legislative — must agree to the establishment of the Commission, submit to its summons, and cooperate with it wholeheartedly.

It is important that truth and its pursuit must be managed well, lest it worsen the instability of the country. Toward this, all attempts to resolve the crisis should conform to the constitution and the rule of law. We urge the media, in particular, to discharge their duties with the view to public service and with faithful adherence to the tenets of a free and responsible press, taking care to report information that is accurate, objective, fair and balanced. We enjoin the people to keep an open mind and apply the resources of reason in winnowing the chaff of lies and deceit from the grain of truth. We counsel calm and sobriety in these hysterical times. We call on all to refrain from violence and to respect the rule of law.

But the search for truth, in times of crisis, may prove tortuous and unsettling. Oftentimes, it is the poor who are always at the punishing end of every crisis. They are the ones that reap the consequences of the turbulence and bear the burden. Therefore, we call on government to immediately institute measures to alleviate the plight of the poor by applying social safety nets to its programs of liberalizing the economy, taking care, for example, that its mobilization of resources would not unduly compromise the poor and add further to their already crushing yoke. We urge business and all sectors of society to help lighten the burden of the poor.

The University of Santo Tomas pledges its support to the nation's quest for the truth. Even before the crisis reached fever pitch, she has been hosting dialogues and discussions among leaders and members of society and the Church to clear the issues and arrive at moral and effective responses. Reaffirming her mission to foster truth in charity, the University will continue to host the dialogues. She also vows unity with the poor at this most difficult time and joins the rest of Filipino society in easing their burden.

Something beautiful may yet emerge from the crisis—a people's solidarity with the truth. Let us make this a singular moment for us as a people. Let us banish lies and deceit, taking care to remember the injunction of Saint Thomas Aquinas against falsehood for its capacity to ruin the society. Let us give heed to the call of St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians: "Wherefore, putting away falsehood, let every one speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another." [4:25] Truly, we live together in society, and this is rendered impossible if we do not speak the truth to one another. Let us uphold the truth. Let us be a nation of truth seekers.

Veritas in Caritate
"Seeking the Truth in Love"

"Be on watch and pray always that you will have the strength to go safely through all those things..." *[LUKE 21:36]*

Ship catches fire off Zamboanga Norte

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A passenger ship owned by Sulpicio Lines caught fire off Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte around noon yesterday.

The ship, MV Princess of the World, sailed from Manila for this city with about 118 passengers and 103 crew members, naval authorities and a Sulpicio official, told the INQUIRER.

Commodore Rufino Lopez Jr., commander of the Naval Forces in Western Mindanao, said the ship, which was to dock at the pier here around 4 p.m., suddenly caught fire while sailing in Dulungin Point, about 60 nautical miles from this city around 11 a.m.

He said the distress call was placed by one of the five sea marshals aboard the ship.

Authorities have fielded antiterror teams onboard commercial ships following the February 2004 bombing of Superferry 14 near Manila.

Terrorists' work

Over a hundred people perished in the incident that was blamed on the Abu Sayyaf.

"We don't know yet the cause of fire," Lopez said in reply to queries whether or not the incident was a result of sabotage.

Lopez said authorities immediately alerted other sea vessels in the area while Navy and Coast Guard operatives were sent to rescue the troubled ship.

"We also radioed all big and small fishing vessels with communications (equipment) and the Philippine Air Force to conduct search and rescue operation," he said.

Commodore Alenjandro Flora Jr., chief of the Philippine Coast Guard in the Southwestern Mindanao District, said they also sought help from US Forces here, who sent two Navy patrol craft.

Ramon Ho, manager of the Sulpicio Lines here, said the passengers were ordered to abandon ship when the fire broke out.

"Our crew members tried to put off the fire," he said.

Smoke

As of 4:30 p.m., smoke from the ship can be seen from the shore.

Ho said no casualty had been reported and that another Sulpicio-owned ship, MV Princess of the Carribean, sailed from Dumaguete City to pick up the passengers of the ill-fated ship.

The rescued passengers, some of them picked up from lifeboats by Navy and Coast Guard personnel, were brought to the Sta. Maria Port in Siocon.

Chief Supt. Prospero Noble, Western Mindanao police chief, said about 200 people from the ill-fate ship were in Sta. Maria already.

It was not clear, however, if they included some of the crew members.

The Princess of the World came from Manila on Tuesday then passed by Iloilo City.

Aborted schedule

It sailed from Iloilo 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

"We were expecting it to dock here in Zamboanga City around 4 p.m. Thursday," Ho said.

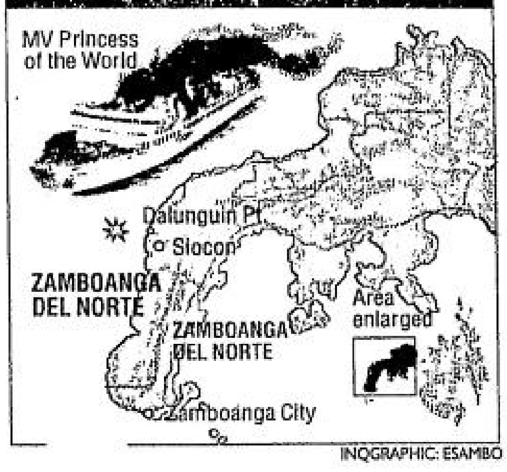
Ho said they could only provide more details on the incident once the crew members reported because communications with the ship had been cut.

"That would be around 7 p.m.," he said.

Naval authorities said they were also having difficulty establishing contacts with the rescue teams.

Julie Alipala with reports from Troy Malcolm and Michael Sarcauga, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Ship on fire



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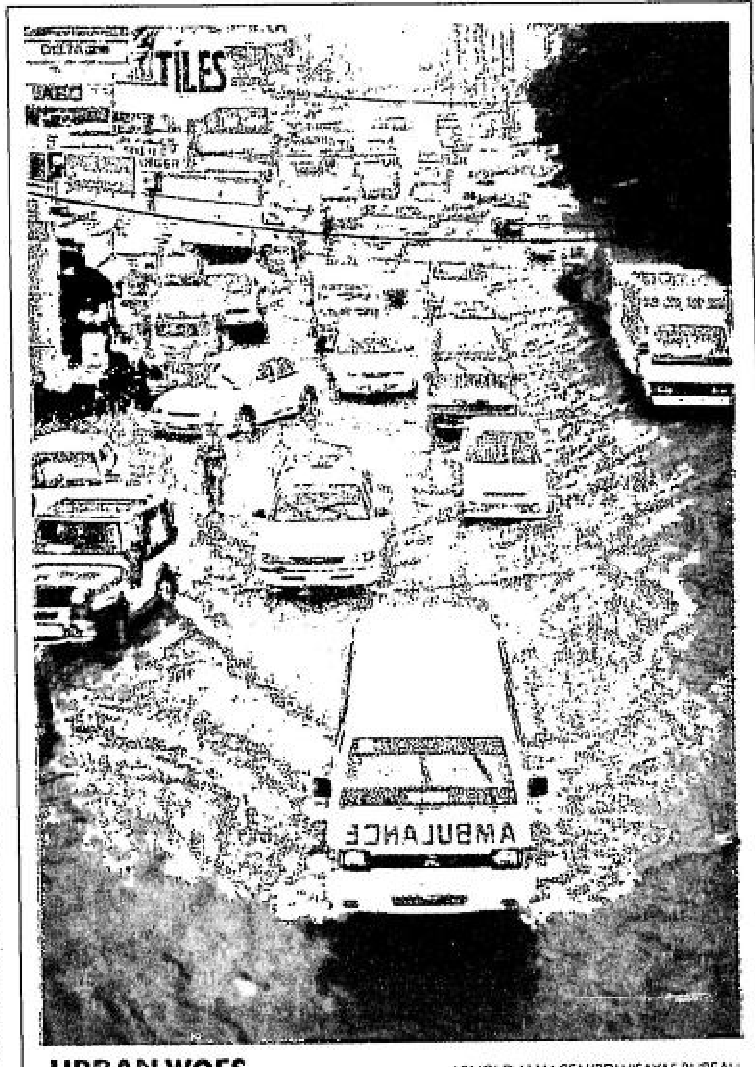

URBAN WOES ARNOLD ALMACEN/PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

Floods brought by tropical depression Emong aggravate traffic jams in Iloilo City which has implemented a flood control project that some critics said was useless.

Batangas steel firm sues judge for alleged prejudice

CALAMBA CITY—A Batangas-based steel manufacturing company has filed at the Supreme Court an administrative case against a Makati regional trial court judge for allegedly prejudging a court case filed against the firm.

In a six-page complaint affidavit, lawyer Nonnatus Chua, counsel and assistant corporate secretary of Steel Corp. (Steelcorp), accused Judge Rommel Baybay of breaching several provisions of the Canons of Judicial Conduct regarding a court judge's fairness in handling cases.

The case was filed before the SC's Office of the Court Administrator last July 1.

The accusation stemmed from Baybay's supposed bias during the court hearing held June 29 where he purportedly showed acts favoring the Filipino Galvanizers Institute which filed the case against Steelcorp.

Chua said Baybay, the presiding judge of Makati regional trial court Branch 132, acted with "unusual haste and prejudgment of the case."

In his affidavit supporting Chua's claims, Antonio Lorenzana, executive vice president and chief operations officer of Steelcorp, attested to the supposed prejudice that Baybay displayed during the hearing.

In the said hearing, Lorenzana said Chua requested Baybay to record the entire proceedings so they could prepare for the cross-examination of the prosecution's witnesses.

He said Chua explained the need to do so because they have been having a hard time getting a copy of the transcript of stenographic notes as Baybay had denied their request.

Lorenzana said Baybay likewise failed to act on Chua's request to order the FGI counsel to give them copies of their witnesses' affidavits and documents.

He said when Chua asked for an extension in presenting all their witnesses, some of whom are government employees, and evidence on the next hearing on July 1, the judge simply turned down his request. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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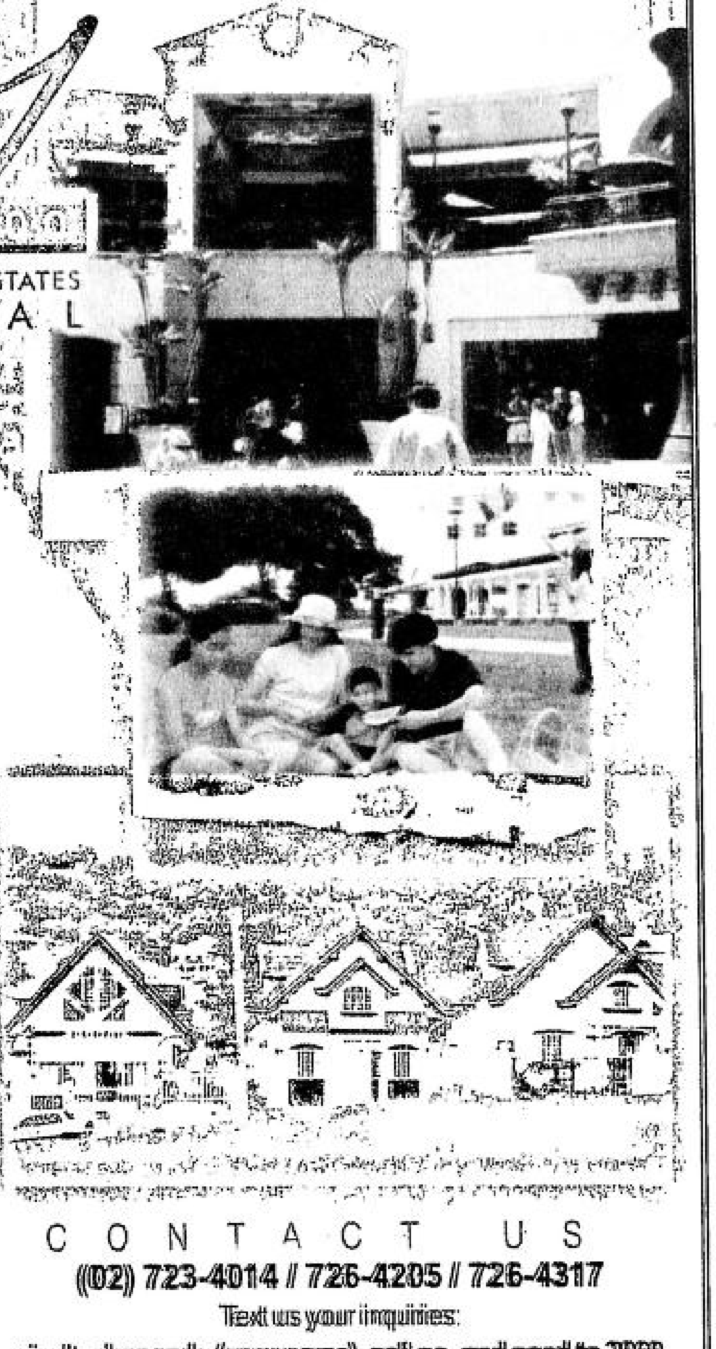

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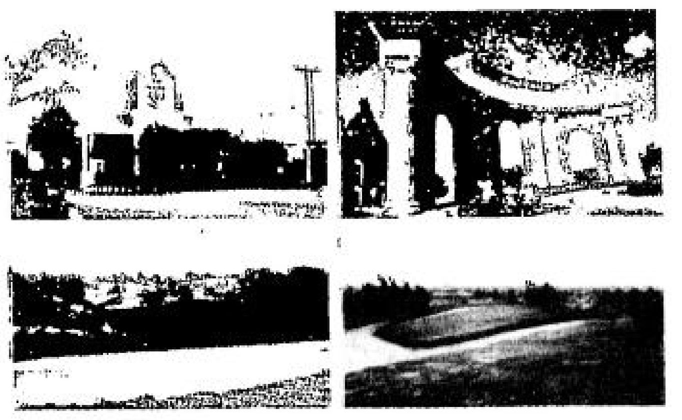

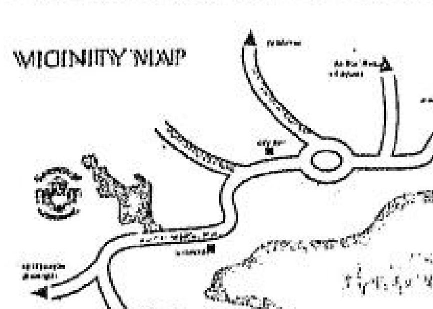

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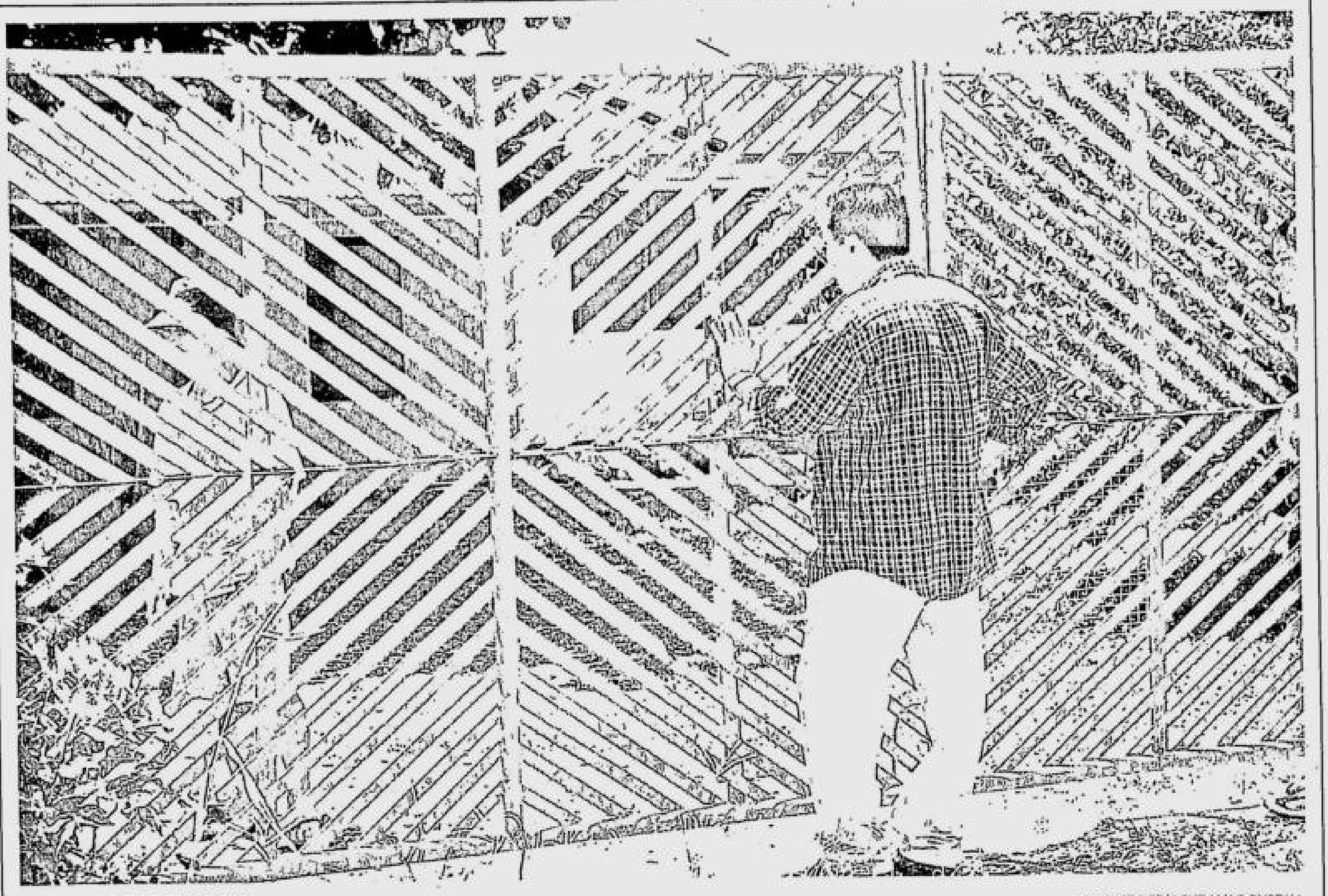

ANYBODY HOME?

JB DEVEZA/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

The iron gate at the farm house in Bukidnon of ex-election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano protects what's inside it from the prying eyes of visitors, especially journalists.

Cops in list of suspects in radioman's killing

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Police have come up with a list of possible suspects in the killing of radioman Rolando Morales in Polomolok, South Cotabato on Sunday afternoon.

The list included some policemen assigned in Polomolok.

But Chief Supt. Danilo Mangila, Central Mindanao police director and head of the Task Force Morales, refused to identify those in the list.

Morales, who served as host of "Tingog sa Barangay" program of Radyo Agong in Polomolok for more than a year, was killed by eight motorcycle-riding gunmen.

Mangila, however, said the Morales murder case was a very complicated one and police are still trying to look at various angles in determining the possible motive for the killing.

Morales, prior to his death, received death threats because of his commentaries against illegal activities, including proliferation of illegal drugs.

Mangila sent policemen from the Regional Mobile Group to help restore normalcy in the town of Polomolok.

Mangila said he was alarmed by the deteriorating peace and order condition in the area, particularly the proliferation of illegal drugs and the series of unsolved killings. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Native plants in danger of disappearing

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—The Cordillera's indigenous plants are being threatened by speculators and science officials here said the government must pour in more resources to protect these and stop their possible extinction.

Dr. Ben Ladilad, Cordillera director of the Department of Science and Technology, said there were reports about people who have scoured the region's mountain ranges and forests to look for native plants that have medicinal values.

"We need to protect these indigenous plants because they might disappear and we might not have even used them to our benefit," Ladilad told reporters here on Tuesday.

He said his office has yet to receive a formal complaint against people who have uprooted indigenous plants and who have tried to smuggle them out of the region.

But he said there were reports about the clandestine efforts by some groups to study the potentials of different plants native to the Cordillera for development into medicine and pesticide.

"I am just afraid that some of these plants might have already been patented abroad and sold to us as medicines or pesticides," he said.

Ladilad said he shared the sentiments of local researchers who felt hopeless in the wake of the government's inability to cope with the demands of research to protect the region's biodiversity.

He blamed the government's budget deficit as a reason that hindered any scientific program aimed at developing the potentials of indigenous plants.

Ladilad called on the DOST, Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to cooperate in preventing the destruction of the region's flora and fauna.

He said the absence of a comprehensive inventory of all plants endemic to the region could aggravate the lack of resources to protect these.

He said there is a need to identify all these plants and study their nature and growth patterns to determine the measures needed to preserve their population.

Ladilad welcomed the efforts of some Cordillera schools that have research programs on biology, agriculture, animal husbandry and forestry that will dwell on the preservation of indigenous plants.

The DOST, he said, is not directly engaged in research on plants that have potentials to be developed into commercial medicines.

But he said the office enters into memoranda of agreement with academic institutions willing to conduct the research. *Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Palawan first to enforce beach monitoring system

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Palawan has just become the first province in the country to adopt a beach monitoring system to avoid the destruction that has ravaged other top tourist attractions.

A multi-sector team will start monitoring the cleanliness of all beaches in the province following the launching of the Beach Ecology Watch program in Barangay Sta. Lourdes in Puerto Princesa City recently.

Eymi Abrio, media specialist of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSD), an environmental policy making body under the Office of the President, said the program shall set standards for all business establishments, including beach resorts and restaurants in the province, based on their impact on the environment.

She said that if Palawan will not take any action on the condition of its beaches, the province "will be the next Cebu or Boracay."

The two are among the eight top tourist destinations in the Philippines, together with Palawan.

However, many beaches in Cebu and Boracay have suffered from destructive activities.

In previous years, the waters of Boracay have been contaminated with coliform, a bacteria that can cause various diseases, due to improper solid waste management. Despite the influx of tourists that brought economic progress to the area, the government did not ensure the protection of the environment.

"We will not take the path they have taken," Abrio said, because "we don't want that to happen to Palawan."

In an orientation workshop recently, representatives from the business sector, local government units, non-government organizations, and tour operators agreed to implement the program in the municipalities.

Abrio said the beach eco-watch program has been launched in various parts of the world, but the Palawan project is the first in the Philippines.

A monitoring team shall conduct regular inspections and give citations for the best and worst establishments according to set criteria.

The award may be in the form of a flag or card, which can be a marketing tool for resorts, Abrio said.

Standards will be based on provisions in the Clean Air Act, Water Code, Solid Waste Management Act, and other environmental standards. *Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Army hunt for rebels scares villagers

BONTOC, Mt. Province—Villagers in Besao town said they were scared of their lives after government soldiers conducted a series of aerial bombings while they pursued New People's Army rebels.

Quoting results of fact-finding missions of various groups in the province, Gwen Longid, chair of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance-Mt. Province, said soldiers from the Army's 503rd and 502nd divisions of the reconnaissance company of the 45th, 54th and 77th Infantry Battalions launched aerial bombings using Bronco planes in Barangay Dandanak in Besao.

Aside from the aerial bombings, the military also burned two rice granaries and a nipa hut in Barangay Pananuman in Tubo, Abra and in Barangay Tambuan in Besao, Longid said.

Barangay Pananuman is along the boundary of Besao and Tubo.

Longid said the bombings of the village and the burning of the rice granary happened at a time when the farmers were harvesting rice after the planting season six months ago.

Lt. Sandiale Mangalen, commanding officer of the Charlie Company of the 54th IB, confirmed the aerial bombings in Besao, saying the attacks were meant to subdue the communist rebels as part of their anti-insurgency measures.

Mangalen, however, said they have yet to verify reports if a rice granary was burned during the pursuit operations. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Pagsanjan seeks tourism boost with Fil-Am actress' arrival

PAGSANJAN, Laguna—This town's mayor volunteered to lead a group of artists in welcoming the arrival of Filipino-American actress Giovannie Pico (Giovannie Anne Cabangis-Espiritu) and invited the actress to visit what is considered as Laguna's tourism capital.

Emilio Ramon Ejercito, Pagsanjan mayor and vice president of the Artists Guild of the Philippines (AGP), said his constituents were excited over the prospect of Pico visiting the town.

Pico broke into international fame by bagging a role in the hit American TV series "E.R."

When she agrees to come to Pagsanjan, the mayor said, he would prepare a grand welcome for the Hollywood Filipina actress.

She would be met by the various cultural presentations, a banquet, tour of the Pagsanjan Falls.

"In the process, the visit of Giovannie here would hopefully boast our tourism industry here," said the mayor.

PICO

"Once the actress arrives, I would propose to the AGP to persuade Giovannie to shoot some movies with our Filipino stars," Ejercito said.

Ejercito should Pico agree to do movies in the Philippines, Pagsanjan would be a good locale for a shooting to promote the town's various attractions, mainly its waterfalls and rapids.

"Anything wholesome will do good in promoting Pagsanjan," said the mayor. *Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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Arrests show 'jueteng' in Calabarzon continues

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Just as the Calabarzon police insist that they have successfully stamped out the illegal numbers game in the region in the past two months, two *jueteng cabos* (bet collectors) were arrested in Pagbilao, Quezon on Wednesday.

The arrest was proof that the operations of the illegal numbers racket. have not been stopped in some parts of Quezon, Laguna and Batangas as alleged by anti-*jueteng* crusader Archbishop Oscar Cruz.

A ranking intelligence police official earlier told the INQUIRER that *jueteng* operations being maintained by Totoy Haruta in Laguna, Doña Charing Magbuhos in Quezon and Gov. Armando Sanchez in Batangas started "normal operations" almost two weeks ago.

In a report from the office of Supt. Rustico Bascugin, public information chief, elements of the Anti-Illegal Gambling Special Operations Task Force, led by Insp. Cresly Naulgan, arrested suspected bet collectors Manuel de Rama, 40, and Josefine Acedillo, 43.

The report said the two were caught while in the act of arranging several pieces of *lastillas* (*jueteng* bet lists) in Barangay Del Carmen at around 11:30 a.m.

Also confiscated from them were ball pens and bets amounting to only P60.

"When interviewed by the operating elements, (the arrested persons) refused to name their maintainer and further claimed that their operation is guerrilla type," the report said.

The suspects revealed that *jueteng* draws in the province are being held "somewhere in Tayabas, Quezon."

Meanwhile, Chief Supt. Jesus Versoza, Calabarzon police director, ordered Senior Supt. Federico Terte, Laguna police director, to explain his failure to submit a certification from his office regarding its campaign against *jueteng* in the province as scheduled.

Versoza likewise asked Terte to submit a report about the alleged existence of *jueteng* in the towns of San Pedro, Nagcarlan, Liliw, San Pablo, Pila, Pagsanjan, Pangil, Siniloan and Majayjay.

Except for San Pedro, the said towns are located in the third and fourth districts of Laguna, the known stronghold of Haruta.

"Submit to this office … your explanation as to why no disciplinary action must be taken against you for your failure to submit the (*jueteng*) certifications on time in spite of the basic memo and tracer sent to your office," Versoza said in his memorandum dated July 4.

He added: "Laguna is the only (provincial police office) that failed to submit the requirement on time."

Also yesterday, tricycle drivers in a terminal near this camp admitted that *cabos* collecting bet money in the area tipped them off that *jueteng* operations are now back to normal.

"We have actually placed our bets a while ago. The *cabo* said the results will be known after lunch time," a driver told the INQUIRER. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Roxas City port workers end strike

By Felipe Celino
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—The 248 port workers at the Culasi Port here ended their strike after Roxas City Mayor Antonio del Rosario promised to look into their problems.

The members of the Culasi Arrastre Workers Labor Union (CAWLU) dispersed their picket line at Capiz's premier port at about 1 p.m., four days after they went on strike on Monday to press the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) to fulfill an earlier agreement to release their benefits.

Del Rosario met with CAWLU legal counsel Eleazar Almalbis Jr. and Harry Tolentino, PPA acting chief in Roxas, to discuss the problem of the port workers.

After the meeting, Del Rosario promised to negotiate with the PPA so their benefits would be released. At the same time, the PPA also agreed to pay their salaries if they lifted the strike.

The strike had crippled operations at the port. Some shipping lines even warned that they would be compelled to use other ports in nearby provinces if the strike dragged on.

The labor union accused the PPA of failing to honor what they had agreed upon during a conciliation meeting on April 19.

These include timely payment of their salaries, the release of their salary differentials and remittance of Social Security System contributions at the agency's office in Roxas City instead of in Iloilo City.

The union said they had kept their part of the bargain, including the submission of a complete listing of its employees to the PPA.

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It's a (horrible) dog's life for Manila's caged strays

By Tina G. Santos

HORRIBLE.

This was how members of the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) described the method being considered by the city government of Manila to get rid of stray dogs.

As of yesterday, more than a hundred dogs at the city pound were killed through electrocution.

Emil Rabano, a volunteer of PAWS who documented the procedure, said city pound personnel would pull a dog from a cage with a long steel pole with a rope at the end.

"A dog is dragged, almost suffocating, to the electrocution chamber," he said. "The dog is literally sandwiched between the metal cage and steel roof. Electricity is then released, passing through the roof and then transmitted to the dog."

The dead dogs are then put on a big weighing scale, one on top of the other. In batches of 10, their stomachs are slit while the veterinarian injects enzymes into them, he added.

"The dogs were really treated brutally. Vets use about 300 to 500 volts of electricity per three seconds in the process," Rabano said.

But according to Dr. Manuel Socorro of the city's Veterinary Inspection Bureau (VIB), the procedure was just part of an experiment to find a less expensive method than lethal injection, which costs the city government about P250 per dog.

Dogs that were mostly sick, emaciated and afflicted with mange, and left unclaimed by their owners were usually put to sleep through lethal injection, he said, adding that the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) had given them the go signal to proceed with the study.

"The BAI gave us a year to conduct the experiment. We started about two months ago. We still have to submit the results to the BAI for deliberation," Socorro said.

About 30 more dogs are scheduled to undergo the same method until next month.

Mayor Lito Atienza said he was not aware that there was such a study being conducted by the VIB.

However, he admitted that it was the city's policy "to put them (unclaimed dogs) to sleep."

"But there are other civilized ways to do it, definitely not through electrocution. I will not allow it," he said.

Atienza added that he had asked Dr. Jose Diaz, the city veterinarian, to explain the matter. An investigation could follow, if necessary, he said.

Meanwhile, PAWS officials said they intend to give a letter expressing their concern to city officials of Manila.

"Experiments are allowed, but animals should not suffer unnecessary pain," said Ramona Consunji, one of the directors of PAWS.

"It may be legal because it was allowed by the BAI, but it does not make it less unethical, immoral and inhumane," she added. "These barbaric practices simply are not allowed in civilized societies such as ours."

"Electrocution is the second most commonly used method that had been already banned to get rid of unclaimed dogs, next to poisoning. We're going one step backwards," said Anna Cabrera, another PAWS director.

Cabrera even cited the recent "Dog Walk For a Cause (Luv ko c Bantay)" campaign where thousands of dogs and their owners took to the streets to protest the senseless cruelty and indiscriminate slaughter of dogs.

"It's embarrassing. The city that launched a dog walk to fight animal cruelty is now killing dogs," Cabrera added.

Parañaque treasurer flunks BIR lifestyle check

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance will file graft charges today against the City Treasurer of Parañaque City after an investigation revealed that he bought numerous properties and luxury vehicles, and had made trips abroad, expenses he couldn't have been able to afford based on his declared income.

The DOF said the filing of charges against Parañaque City Treasurer Liberato M. Carabeo in the Office of the Ombudsman meant the official had failed a lifestyle check conducted by the Revenue Integrity Protection Service (Rips). The Rips is tasked with investigating officials and employees of revenue-collecting agencies suspected of living beyond their means.

According to the complaint affidavit obtained by the INQUIRER, Carabeo earns a gross salary of P291,036 a year, or P24,253 a month. When he started out as a revenue collection clerk at the Parañaque City Treasurer's Office in 1981, he was earning a gross annual salary of only P8,400, or P700 a month.

Despite Carabeo's "average" income, the Rips said he was able to buy two residential lots in Tagaytay City, a townhouse in Cavite City, three lots in Laguna, seven luxury vehicles, and one share in the Palms Country Club in Alabang, Muntinlupa City, currently priced at P745,000, and which could only be purchased in cash.

Carabeo's lavish lifestyle was also highlighted by at least 15 unauthorized trips abroad from 1996 to 2004, according to the Rips.

Bus accident spares Fernando, other MMDA execs

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A BUS carrying Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Bayani Fernando and other top officials of the agency nearly fell into a ravine in Rodriguez, Rizal, yesterday. Nobody was seriously hurt.

The bus, an MMDA mobile office, tilted dangerously several times before its tires got stuck in layers of mud at Mt. Balagbag in Barangay San Isidro.

Fernando, MMDA Vice Chair Cesar Lacuna, General Manager Robert Nacianceno, and 25 other MMDA officials were with Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuerpo at the time of the incident.

"They (MMDA officials) were in our town to look at a 9,000-hectare site in the town as a possible relocation site for 3,000 illegal settlers in Metro Manila," Cuerpo told the INQUIRER.

To get an overview of the area, Cuerpo suggested that they go up the town's highest mountain.

Fernando then decided that all officials should take the MMDA bus, while their cars followed.

But as they climbed up the mountain shortly before lunch yesterday, the driver saw that rocks and mud had fallen on one side of the road.

He steered the bus to the other side. But recent rains had made the road wet and slippery. The bus skidded toward the edge of the road, Cuerpo narrated.

Most of the officials were terrified as the bus got stuck, tilting on the edge of a precipice.

Lacuna and other officials jumped out of the bus through the windows, according to an MMDA statement.

Fernando and some officials sustained bruises as they hurriedly exited the bus, the statement added.

"I thought because of what happened, Fernando would just cancel the trip," Cuerpo said.

But after everyone had safely gotten off the bus, Fernando told the MMDA officials to get in the cars that had followed them.

Cuerpo said Fernando appeared satisfied with what he saw at the top of the mountain.

The bus was still being towed out of the mud as of press time.

MRT train operator not yet off the hook

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE OPERATOR of the Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3) train that killed a security guard early yesterday morning may still face prosecution, although the incident appeared to be an accident.

The police said yesterday that Randy Santiago, an MRT train operator for about three years, could be charged with reckless imprudence resulting in homicide.

Santiago drove the train that fatally hit security guard Simon Balucos at around 4:30 a.m. on Wednesday.

"It's automatic that there would be liability on the part of the operator," said PO3 Noel Pardiñas, case investigator.

Pardiñas said yesterday the Makati Police Department (MPD) Criminal Investigation Division was waiting for the guard's family to indicate if it wanted to file criminal charges against the train operator.

The investigator added that the family and the MRT administration might also decide to settle the matter amicably.

He said that Santiago, assisted by an MRT administrative officer, went to the MPD Homicide Division around 9 p.m. on Wednesday to give his side on the incident.

Pardiñas said the operator denied seeing anybody on the tracks when the southbound train going toward the Buendia Station went past the Guadalupe Station, where Balucos was found dead with severe head and body injuries.

Passengers said that at the approach to the Buendia Station, they felt the train coaches moving in a jerky manner, which could have been an indication that the train had hit something solid underneath.

Santiago reportedly hit the brakes before continuing the trip, turning around for the northbound trip then back again before reporting to the North Avenue depot.

The police concluded that Balucos' death was an accident.

"There was no foul play because he was alone on the tracks. He (Balucos) may have been too tired or sleepy when the incident occurred," said Pardiñas.

The guard reportedly worked on the 10 p.m.-6 a.m. shift. *With Sharline Bareng, trainee*

Fire eats up commercial complex in Las Piñas

By Jocelyn R. Uy

WHAT used to be a busy commercial complex in Las Piñas City became a deserted land of debris and burnt wood after it was razed by a fire early morning yesterday.

The fire that broke out at the Westbay Commercial Plaza along Zapote Junction, Zapote, Las Piñas City, at 3:55 a.m. left nothing but the concrete walls of the complex, Deputy Fire Marshal Aldwin Salazar told the INQUIRER.

The 1,000-sq. m. complex, owned by brothers Joe and Juan Cuenca, housed 40 establishments, including a furniture shop, the management's main office, beerhouses and night clubs, said Salazar.

A resident who worked in the market beside the complex had reported the blaze to firemen, Salazar said.

Damages were estimated at P1.5 million after the fire was put out at 5:30 a.m.

Some shanties occupying a strip just behind the complex were also destroyed by the fire that displaced at least 17 families.

Fire investigators are eyeing arson as a probable cause of the blaze, based on accounts of witnesses, said Salazar.

Early last year, Westbay tenants and its owners had notified firemen about threats to burn down the commercial center.

The threats were made by a former worker of Westbay, Salazar said.

"We made an investigation on the threats twice last year," the fire marshal added.

However, he reiterated that fire investigators had yet to get statements from witnesses before they could establish the cause of the fire.

"Although the rainy season has begun, the public must still be on guard against such fires," said Salazar.

For their part, he said that firefighters continue to inform residents about tips in line with their fire prevention campaign.

Salazar also reminded the public to check their LPG tanks regularly for leaks.

About 60 percent of fire incidents had been traced to LPG tank leaks, he added.

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Ayala-Alabang businesswoman in tax raps

By Cynthia D. Balana

AN AYALA-ALABANG businesswoman dealing in real estate was charged yesterday with tax evasion by the Bureau of Internal Revenue for failing to settle tax deficiencies amounting to P8.5 million in income taxes and P3.1 million in value-added tax payments for three years.

Myra Santos Brodett joined the list of over 20 personalities charged by the BIR before the Department of Justice under its "Operation: RATE (Run After Tax Evaders)" campaign, which started early this year.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said Brodett, who has a license to sell from the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, had not filed income tax returns for 1995, 2003 and 2004 from highly profitable deals and business operations.

Parayno said the BIR was able to establish that Brodett owned a 544.29-sq.m. commercial lot located along Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue in Makati City, and had entered into a joint venture with Meridien High Rise Development Corp. to build the 30-story West of Ayala Condominium on her property.

As part of the deal, Parayno said, Brodett was given a signing bonus of P3.5 million by Meridien in 1995. She was also given 1,867.32 sq.m. of floor space as her share in the condominium under the joint venture agreement with the developer.

Brodett sold three condominium units at P8.4 million in 2003, and another six units at P20.7 million in 2004, in her individual capacity as real estate dealer.

Parayno said the BIR discovered Brodett's tax deficiencies after it obtained copies of the transactions, including deeds of absolute sale, condominium certificates of title, and their corresponding certificates authorizing the registration.

The BIR found out that Brodett's transactions consisted only of payments of expanded withholding taxes and documentary stamp taxes for the sale of the condominium units.

Parayno said that as an experienced real estate dealer, Brodett should be aware that proceeds from the sale of condominium units would require the payment of "creditable taxes."

He said Brodett was still required to file her income tax returns and whatever creditable taxes withheld, which could be deducted from her income tax dues.

Brodett's non-filing of returns showed prima facie existence of fraud with intent to evade the payment of proper taxes, a violation of the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, Parayno added.

Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan, in charge of Operation: RATE, said in the Department of Finance-BIR complaint that a person who is knowledgeable enough to understand the concept and complexities of joint venture agreements in the construction of an enormous edifice, cannot and should not be allowed to feign ignorance of one's tax obligations.

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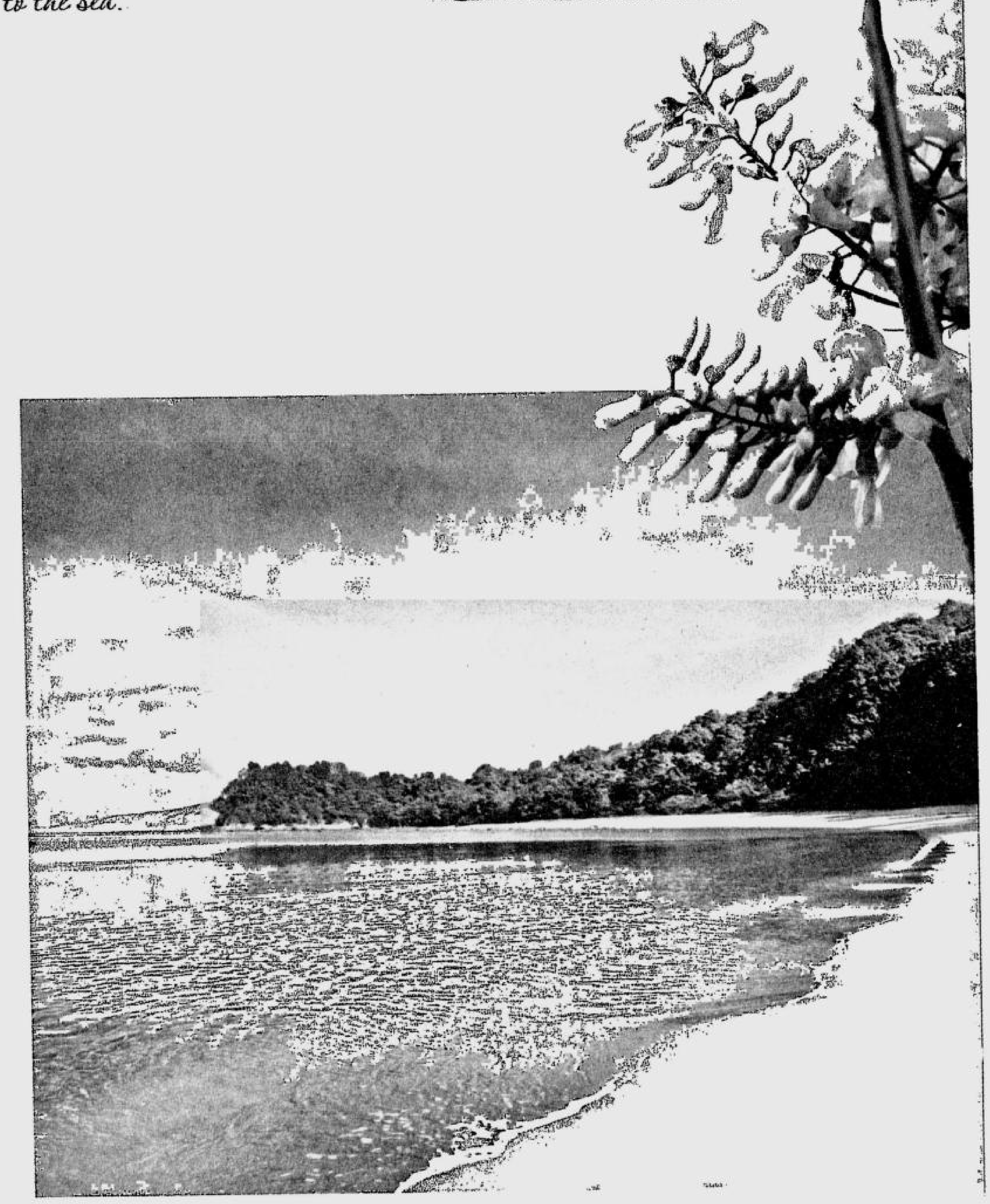

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Manalo safely through; Luat falls

KAOHSIUNG, Taiwan—Marlon Manalo again showed sizzling form yesterday, shutting out Taiwan's Huang Chien-chie, 10-0, to become the first Filipino to reach the round of 16 in the 2005 World Pool Championship at the Kaohsiung Business Exhibition Center.

The 29-year-old former snooker champion from Mandaluyong played almost flawlessly in stark contrast to his scrambling 10-9 win over American Charles Bryant in the round of 64 Wednesday night.

The smashing win, which recalled Manalo's explosive showing in the eliminations where he finished No. 2 in Group 15, lifted the spirits of the Filipinos following the shocking 10-8 loss by Rodolfo Luat earlier in the day.

After a 10-1 rout of Vietnam's Dung Luong Chi in the round of 64, Luat proved no match to his second Vietnamese foe, Nguyen Thanh Nam, who showed his upset intentions by taking an early 7-4 advantage.

EASIEST OF WINS: Marlon Manalo in action.

Luat rallied to win the next three racks and knot the score at 7, but the Filipino hit a bad safety shot on the 5-ball in the 15th rack to yield the initiative back to the Vietnamese.

Thanh took the next two racks to sit on the hill.

Luat regained possession and managed to make it 8-9, but an error in the 18th rack eventually allowed the Vietnamese to close out the match and move on to the round of 16.

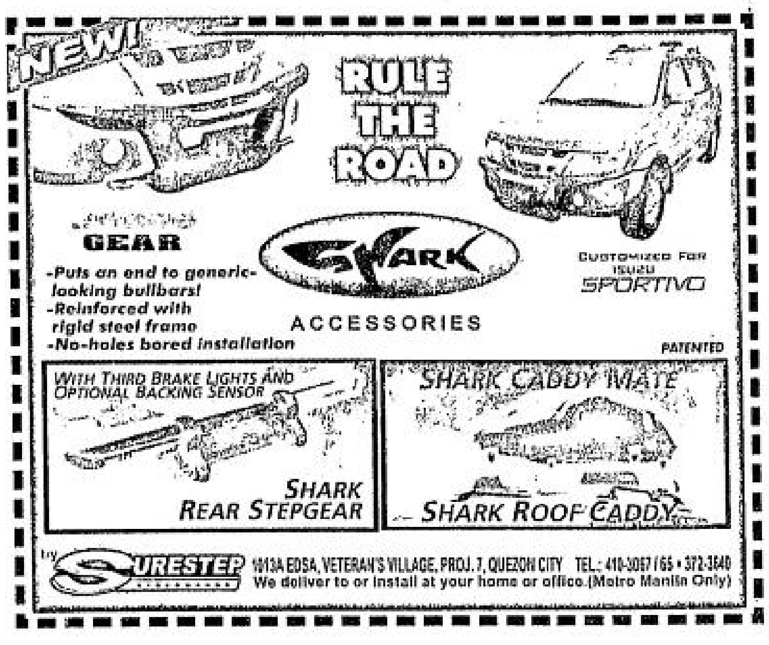
Alex Pagulayan Warren Kiamco and Gandy Valle were still playing at press time.

Kiamco and Valle won their respective matches late Wednesday evening to join Pagulayan, Manalo and Luat in the round of 32.

Kiamco defeated David Reljic of Australia, 10-6, while Valle subdued Do Hoang Quan of Vietnam, 10-8.

Kiamco was scheduled to face Chang Jung-

MANALO/ A27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Phone Pals out to pull even today

BACK in an old, familiar situation, Talk 'N Text seeks to move on equal footing with San Miguel Beer today in Game 4 of the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference Finals at the Araneta Coliseum.

GAME TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
7:30 p.m.—SMB vs TNT

Fresh off a breakthrough 103-77 win in Game 3, the Phone Pals hope to duplicate the victory starting at 7:30 p.m. and reduce the best-of-seven series into a race-to-three affair.

"Sometimes, history repeats itself," said Talk 'N Text coach Joel Banal. "We've been in this situation twice before."

In the 2003 All-Filipino Cup, Talk 'N Text trailed 0-2 in the best-of-seven Finals against Coca-Cola before sweeping the next four games to win its first ever conference title.

The Phone Pals also tied the Barangay Ginebra Kings after winning Games 3 and 4 of the Philippine Cup Finals last year only to drop the next two games and yield the title.

This time around, the Phone Pals are up against a team with nine PBA Finals appearances in six years, winning six of them under San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico.

"I hope we could neutralize San Miguel's championship experience," said Banal.

The Phone Pals experienced championship jitters in the opener and then squandered a 20-point lead in

PHONE/ A25

TNT import Gerald Honeycutt drives off SMB's Dorian Peña (center) and Danny Seigle in Game 3 on Wednesday. RYAN LIM

Jayvie in 3-way tie for Malaysia lead

JAYVIE Agojo fired a two-over-par 74 yesterday and hung on to a share of the lead with two others going into the final round of the Pharmaton Malaysian Ladies Amateur Golf Championship at the Sutera Harbour Golf and Country Club in Kota Kinabalu.

Agojo, the 18-year-old reigning Philippine Ladies champion, turned in nines of 37-37 for a 36-hole total of 147.

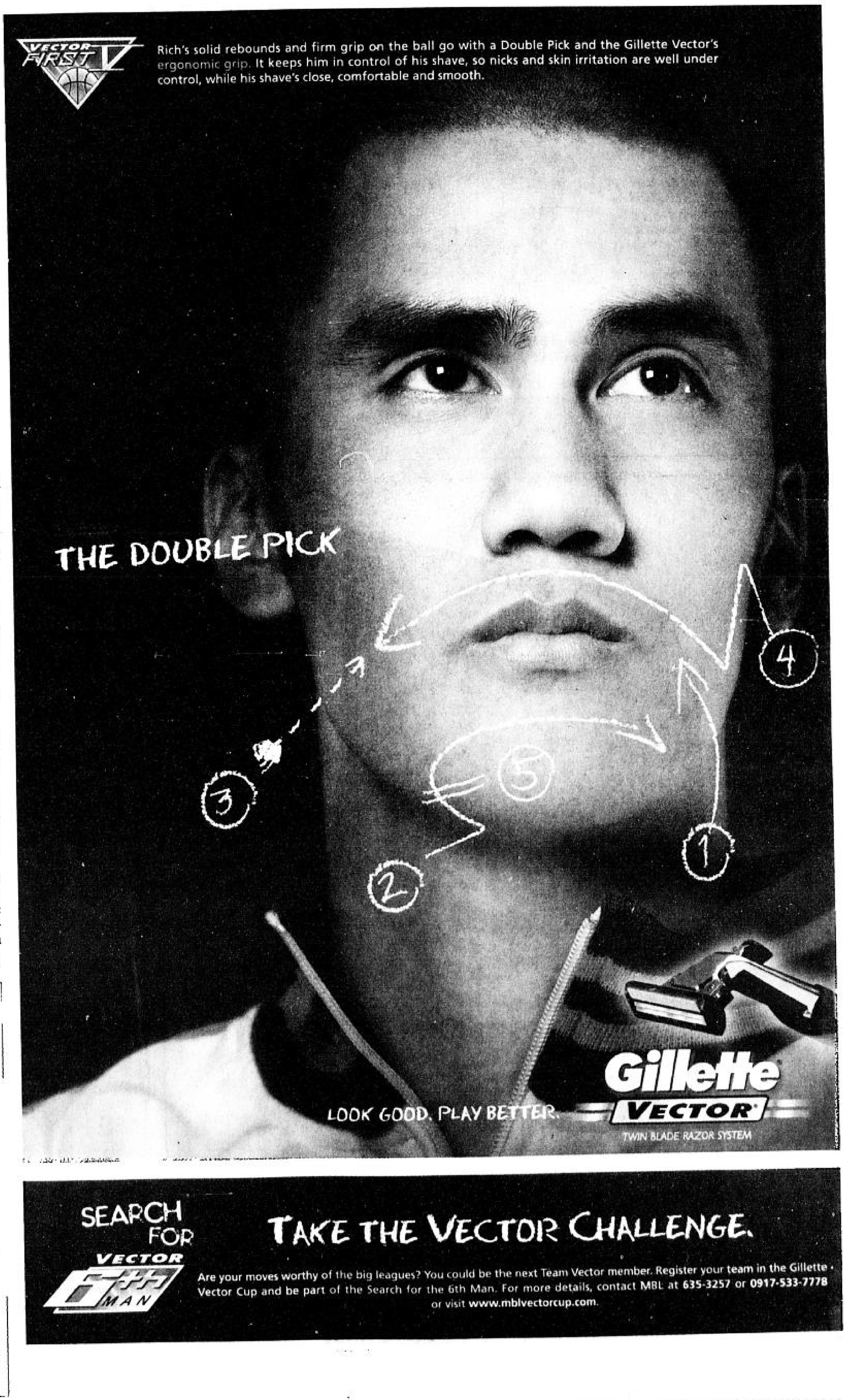
She shared the top with first-day co-leader K. Dayanitha of Malaysia, who also had a 74, and Tiranun Yoopan of Thailand, who shot the day's best of 72.

Paulina Sotto, the only other Filipina in the field, slipped to an 88 after an 85 in the first round.

But while Agojo remained in the hunt for the crown in Sabah, Juvic Pagunsan bowed out in the second round of the match play phase of the Japan Amateur Championship, also yesterday.

Pagunsan, 26, routed Japan's Hashisumi, 5 and 4, in the first round of the match play but failed to sustain his charge in the afternoon and lost via the same score to another Japanese bet, Nagano.

Pagunsan qualified to the match plays with the third best total, aided by a course-record 68 in the first round.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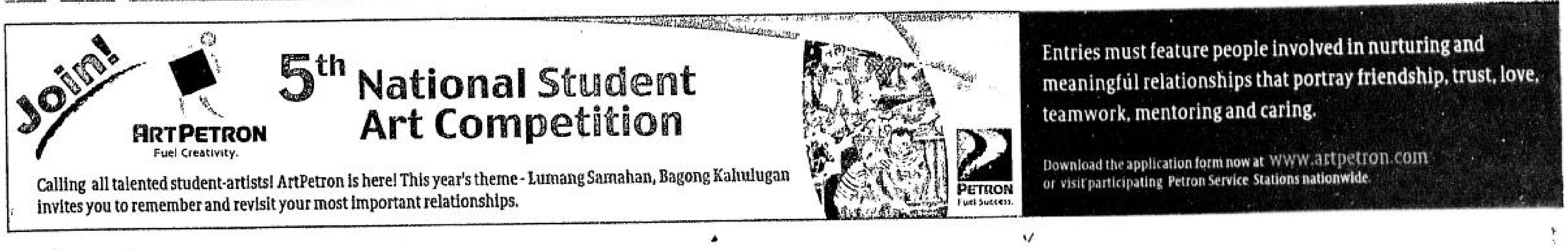
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STANDINGS	W	L
PCU	3	0
Letran	3	0
Mapua	3	0
Benilde	3	0
JRU	0	2
Perpetual	0	3
San Beda	0	3
SSC	0	3

GAMES TODAY
(*Cuneta Astrodome*)
11:30 a.m.—St. Benilde vs SSC (Jrs)
2 p.m.—St. Benilde vs SSC (Srs)
4 p.m.—Letran vs JRU (Srs)
6 p.m.—Letran vs JRU (Jrs)

Knights, surging Blazers shoot for fourth wins

THE LETRAN Knights aren't taking the winless Jose Rizal U Bombers lightly when they clash in the 81st NCAA season today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

"They showed big improvement after their opening game," said coach Louie Alas, who will try to extend the Knights' run to four wins at 4 p.m.

The St. Benilde Blazers will also take a cautious stand when they battle the struggling San Sebastian Stags at 2 p.m.

"A team hungry for a win is a very dangerous opponent," said new Blazers coach Caloy Garcia, who has steered last season's cellar-dwellers to an impressive 3-0 start.

While orchestrating the Blazers' offense, Paolo Orbeta has been piling up points as well by averaging a team-high 14.3 markers per game.

Jay Sagad has been effectively patrolling the paint with 10 points and 11.3 rebounds.

"It's a very good start," Garcia noted after the Blazers trounced San Beda, 55-45, last Monday. "But I always remind my players that there is still a lot of work to do."

The Knights' own playmaker, Boyet Bautista, has been providing the leadership along with senior forward Aaron Aban.

Letran also got an outstanding offensive performance from sophomore JP Alcaraz, who topscored with 21 points in the Knights' recent 78-65 win over the Stags.

Leo Najorda, who scattered 31 points against the Knights, is expected to lead the Stags.

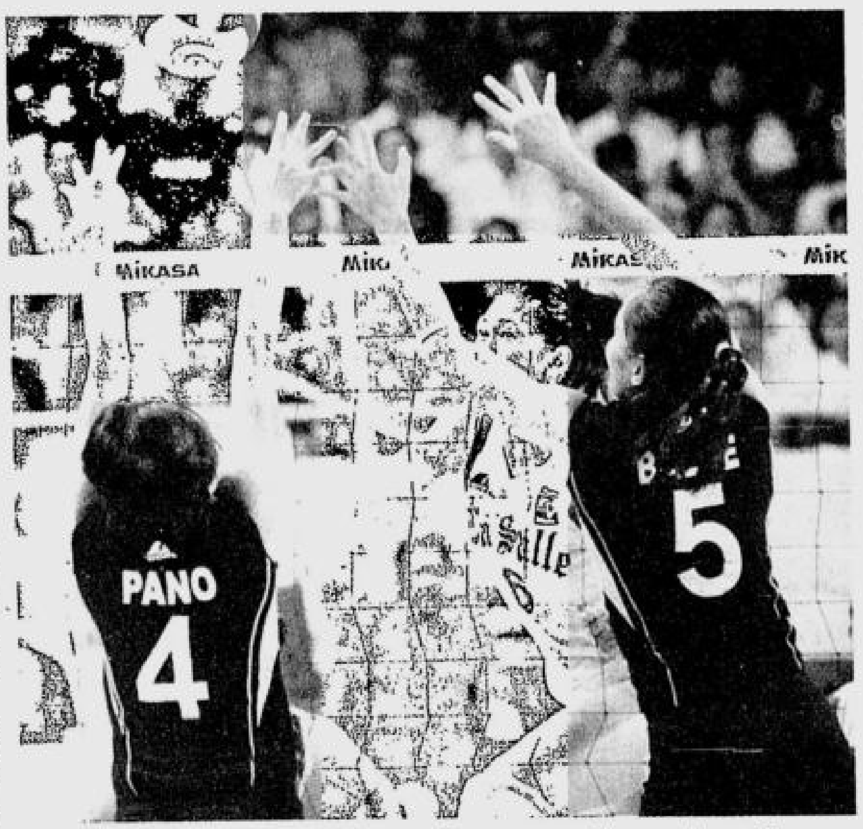
The Bombers have been struggling with their rookie-laden lineup, but forward Edson Tala showed promise by scoring 16 points in their 66-52 loss to Mapua.

Jasmine W. Payo

Lady Archers bag V-League crown

By Marc Anthony Reyes

LA SALLE survived an epic third set then averted a fourth-set collapse to down University of Santo Tomas, 17-25, 25-22, 30-28, 25-20, last night and capture its second straight Shakey's V-League conference title before a capacity crowd at the Rizal Coliseum.



LA SALLE'S conference MVP Maureen Penetrante spikes one in past Joyce Pano (4) and Mary Jean Balse (5) of UST in yesterday's match. RYAN LIM

Powered by conference Best Attacker Michelle Carolino, the Lady Archers swept the best-of-three series over the Tigresses, who took the first set impressively then blew four set-point opportunities in the dramatic third set.

"I said earlier that whoever wins the third set would win the match," said La Salle coach Ramil de Jesus, also the RP mentor of the Southeast Asian Games squad. "We pushed so hard in that set and gave it our best."

The Tigresses, who lost Game 1, also in four sets, pushed the Lady Archers to the wall at 24-23, 26-25, 27-26 and 28-27 in the third. But La Salle bravely fought back each time through Carolino, Manilla Santos and Concepcion Legaspi.

A service error by Mary Jean Balse finally derailed UST's bid.

"That kind of set could either wear down or boost a team," said De Jesus, who also steered La Salle to the conference crown last year.

That's exactly what happened in the fourth set as the Lady Archers played with renewed vigor while the Tigresses wearily plodded on.

"We are familiar with the way UST plays and that spelled the difference in

LA SALLE/ A24

Bata and Django: Who's better or worse

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

NOTHING wrong with Django Bustamante having had to struggle in the qualifying round of the World Pool Championship in Kaohsiung. He finally made it to the all-important knockout round, after all.

But when Django, once ranked the world's No. 1, fumbled and was knocked out right in the opener of the Final 64, the championship was upset.

Django's shocking fall was equal to losing a series mainstay, like what happened to Dwayne Wade, at the height of the NBA conference finals.

The 2005 World Pool series had lost one of its shining stars very, very early.

Here at home, Django's unbelievable ouster was received with distress and disbelief.

Local *bilyar* fans, who the day before mourned the exit of Efren "Bata" Reyes in the qualifying phase, were not ready for the tragedy.

* * *

Could you believe that? Swore Nick Halling, ESPN's black-shirted tournament host.

Harder to comprehend, of course, was how Django could've missed a short, easy shot at the yellow 9-ball in the seventh frame, a fault that ultimately tilted the match in favor of the unheralded Chang Jung-ling of Taiwan.

Chang, a 20-year-old World Pool debutante who appeared like a raw, untrained farm cock compared to Django who looked like a tested derby champ, rode on that Pinoy error and soared to an 8-5 lead in the race to 10. Before that, the bushy Taiwanese was behind, 1-5, all but given up for lost.

There was a bigger tragedy in Django's game.

A number of slips and flaws, both in pocketing and defensive placement, would bare that the horrendous miss on that short, easy shot at the 9-ball was anything but accidental.

Django's fall against the unheralded Chinese youngster has bared a deep deterioration in his overall game.

* * *

Of course, Django cannot be expected to admit he's no longer hot and sharp as when he missed capturing the World Pool crown (after a simple scratch) against Earl Strickland in the 2002 Final in Cardiff.

But the sorry signs are all there, and Django has the tyranny of the years to contend with.

Bata Reyes, the Magician? He's not the type to deny that he's already over the hill.

"*Nararamdaman ko na 'yung senyales ng pagtanda* (I already feel the years in my game)," Reyes, 51, told Noli Cruz of the Manila Bulletin.

Short of saying the magic is gone, Bata swore to plod on until he finds a worthy heir.

("*Gusto ko may magmana ng nalalaman ko, pero hanggang kaya ko pang manalo, lalaro pa muna ako.*")

* * *

Waiting for a new magician. The cue artist that would inherit Bata's crown may not be among the Pinoy campaigners who had moved onto the Final 32.

But the prayer is for someone in the able group of Alex Pagulayan, Marlon Manalo, Gandy Valle, to go all the way to the final to keep the Philippine flag flying high in Kaohsiung.

That's a must, after Bata Reyes caused a nationwide pool fever with his world title triumph in Cardiff 1999.

You see, unlike in boxing, it's not openly screamed but the Pinoy fan takes great pride in the gift and prowess of his international stars. The reason we feel bad whenever Bata, Django & Co. get humbled during major foreign sorties.

Take the case of Roger O., nationalist writer from Imus, Cavite, who tried to liken Django's horrendous missed shot to a national anomaly.

"*Maski si* Mike Arroyo *hindi mami*-miss *'yun* (Even the First Gentleman could've not missed that easy shot,") he groaned.

Our guest analyst, a feared pool practitioner in his area in Alapan, added that the fat fellow in exile has always been known for superb pocketing ability.

He refused to elaborate.

60 tiffs up in Pasay derby

SIXTY fights are on tap in a special 4-cock derby tonight at the Pasay City Cockpit with Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Sagupaan Mite Free as sponsors. Entry fee is pegged at P10,000 while cash prize at stake is P300,000, according to hosts Albert and Noli Estrellado. The list of invited participants include Patrick Antonio, Gov. Ito Yñares, Boy de Roca, Pol Estrellado, Boy Royo, Blandy Tolentino, Lito Roque, Ramon Mancenares, Joel Fernando, Jun Topacio, Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza, William Co, LA 939 Group and Cito Mansala. For inquiries, call 8431890, 8431746 and 8166750.

Hatawan 3rd round today

THE THIRD round of eliminations in the Hatawan Sa Tag-Ulan 6-Cock Derby at Roligon Mega Cockpit begins at 3 p.m. today with 79 matches on schedule. Last Wednesday, 13 more entries scored two wins each and qualified for the championship round on July 13. Among them were the entries of Teddy Macadagdag, the Zamboanga Group, Boy de los Reyes, Arman Garcia and ER Opano. Meanwhile, only participants with half, one and 1.5 points can join the event's 4-cock semifinals on Monday. Host Rolly Ligon said P500,000 is allotted for day champions on Monday. For inquiries, call 8512275, 8331638 or 8529812.

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Lina intent on rebuilding BAP's image

By Francis Ochoa

LINA: All for unity

JOEY Lina could have easily come out breathing fire two days after the Philippine Olympic Committee blamed the Basketball Association of the Philippines for the cage mess the country has gotten into.

Instead, the BAP chief spoke of unity and of "buckling down to work" immediately.

Lina yesterday unveiled a grand plan of restructuring and reorganizing the BAP in a move to mend the fractured basketball scene and convince the international basketball federation (Fiba) to lift the country's suspension from international competition.

"The most ideal scenario is that sports leaders put up a united front, [set] aside personal and organizational differences, [forgive] each other for whatever mistakes that may have been committed, bury the hatchet and buckle down to work," Lina said.

The BAP has been expelled from the POC for reneging on a gentleman's agreement regarding the formation of a strong national team to the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championships.

Although Lina refused to reveal the specifics of a plan he intends to present to the POC in a meeting scheduled "very soon," he gave a general description of his goal, which represents the boldest move ever by the BAP to mend fences with major basketball stakeholders in the country.

The former senator has issued letters to the UAAP and NCAA to discuss a possible unification. Lina also plans to talk to the Philippine Basketball Association to preserve the current memorandum of agreement forged between the professional league and the BAP.

He has also sounded off the current BAP officers and members about the need to rewrite the group's constitution.

More importantly, Lina said he would no longer argue the group's "case with the Fiba. We will no longer argue our case before the court of arbitration of sports. And certainly, we will no longer (go through) prolonged exchanges in the media."

"Even if we are beaten black and blue, the attitude we will adopt is not to fight back and prove that we are right," said Lina. "Instead, for the sake of basketball, and unity in sports, we'll do everything possible to smoke the peace pipe, so to speak, as soon as possible with the POC leadership."

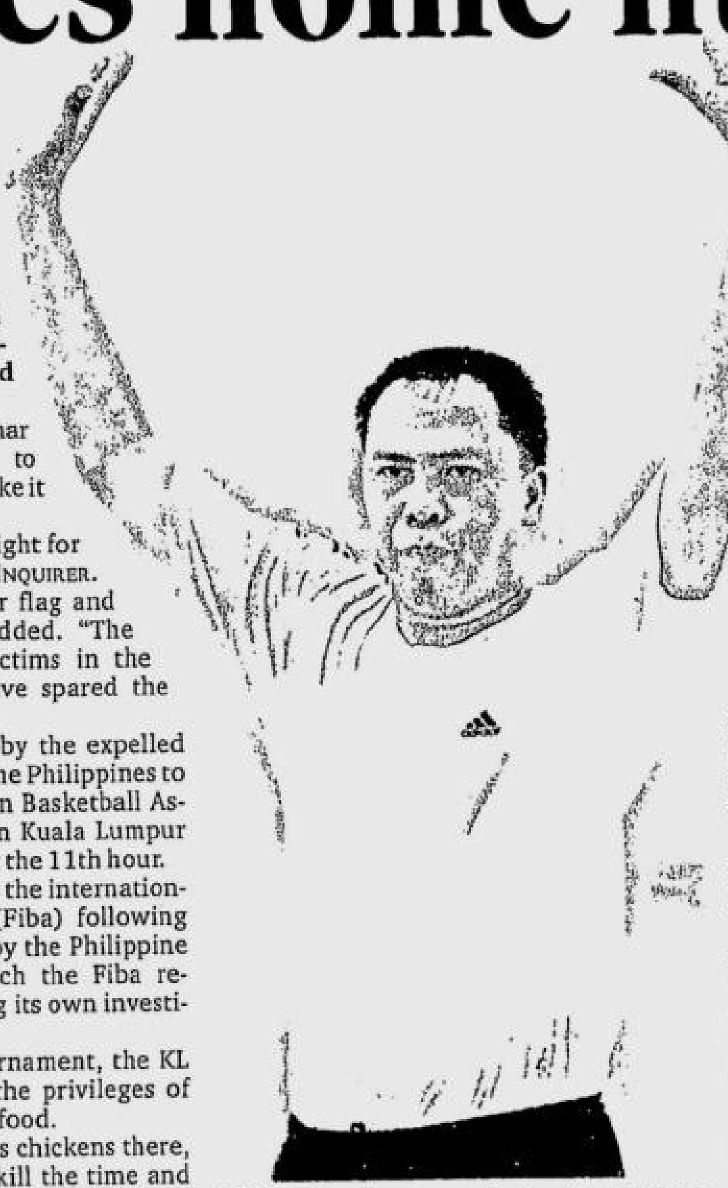
Lina's proactive stance now puts the ball in the POC court.

The POC also blamed the BAP for the suspension slapped by the Fiba on the country, which effectively bars any Philippine participation in all foreign tournaments.

Lina said the suspension is currently under appeal. He added that he has still to receive word from the motion of reconsideration he filed regarding the BAP's expulsion from the POC.

Distraught Seaba five comes home hungry

By Musong R. Castillo



ZAMAR: Our players were like headless chickens.

A PHILIPPINE team barred from defending its Southeast Asian title came home from Malaysia yesterday, heads bowed and badly crushed from an experience its coach described as "the saddest in my life."

In fact, coach Boysie Zamar and the Nationals had to scrounge for funds just to make it back to Manila.

"We did not go there to fight for a cause," Zamar told the INQUIRER. "We went there to play for flag and country, that's all," he added. "The players were innocent victims in the crossfire. They should have spared the players."

The 12-man team sent by the expelled Basketball Association of the Philippines to defend the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) crown in Kuala Lumpur was barred from playing at the 11th hour.

The ban was imposed by the international basketball federation (Fiba) following the expulsion of the BAP by the Philippine Olympic Committee, which the Fiba refused to recognize pending its own investigation.

With RP out of the tournament, the KL organizers withdrew all the privileges of the team like housing and food.

"They were like headless chickens there, wandering the streets to kill the time and fight hunger," said Zamar.

"The accreditation (as a team) gave us three meals a day. In between, *yung mga prutas na kinuha namin sa* dining area *lang ang kinakain namin* (They had to survive on fruits they got from the dining area)."

Zamar said that the players went to Kuala Lumpur without pocket money and all. The team has been without financial support since Cebuana Lhuillier was forced to withdraw more than three months ago.

"These players go to practices on their own. *Wala silang inaasahang kapalit na pera sa ginagawa nila para sa bayan natin* (They were not expecting anything in return)," Zamar said.

A small Filipino crowd almost started a riot during opening day last Tuesday when their compatriots failed to play, according to Jerry Codiñera, an all-time Philippine Basketball Association great who went with the team as an assistant to Zamar.

The team was actually stranded in KL for at least two days since its booking to Manila was set after the tournament.

The POC could have saved the Seaba stint and thus pave the way for the country's entry in the Fiba-Asia men's championship in September, but the local Olympic body refused to grant the team a special permit that the Fiba-Asia had required.

"It was the saddest experience of my life," Zamar said. "Worse, we don't know what's in store and what's going to happen to Philippine basketball (after this)."

Eala: It's business as usual

EALA: Hopeful

AS FAR as the Philippine Basketball Association is concerned, it's business as usual for the national pool training in its backyard.

A crack team culled from the pool currently handled by national coach Chot Reyes is set to depart next week for the Global Hoops Las Vegas summer league, hopeful that the suspension slapped on the country by the international basketball federation (Fiba) will be lifted soon.

"We are proceeding with our training under the mind-set that the suspension will be lifted," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala, who had earlier sent a letter to the Fiba to allow the BAP-formed Philippine team to compete in the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) tournament in Malaysia.

The Seaba is a qualifying tournament for the ABC Championships in Doha this year, which in turn is the qualifier for the World Championships next year. The three events were part of the schedule of the PBA-backed national pool.

"We are saddened by the suspension, but it is business as usual for us," said Eala.

San Miguel Beer, the chief bankroller of the training pool, has reaffirmed its commitment to the squad.

The Las Vegas league will include the national teams of China, Korea and Qatar and NBA ballclubs whose rosters will be filled with aspirants, rookies and free agents.

Francis Ochoa

Laguna Spring cagers battle Baguio today

BAGUIO CITY—Spring Cooking-backed Laguna tries to get back on the winning track today when it faces cellar-dweller Baguio in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the University of Baguio gym here.

The Laguna Spring cagers of NBC president Tac Padilla and Laguna Gov. Teresita "Ninging" Lazaro are favored over the Texas Instruments/Beneco-backed Lions in the 6 p.m. game.

Rodel Manuel, Sonny Manucat and Mar Reyes are expected to carry the load for Spring, which is coming off a long layoff after narrowly losing to Parañaque and Forward Taguig in two of its first three games.

Other Laguna reliables are playmaker Marlon Kalaw, Rodel Mallari and Val Domingo.

"We're all set to go up in the standings," said Laguna coach Vic "Rambo" Sanchez.

The Lions of Vice Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr. pin their hopes on Joel Bona, Melvin Fontanilla, Edbert Ton, Obet Giron and Jun Balares.

"They have crack big men inside, so we'll try to outrun them," said Baguio coach Napoleon "Nap" Garcia.

Armstrong bares charitable side

CRIT LYONNAIS
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LANCE Armstrong eats as he cycles in the fifth stage. REUTERS

MONTARGIS, France—Lance Armstrong could afford to show his charitable side after the fifth stage of the Tour de France here Wednesday where Australian Robbie McEwen finally got to show his sprinting prowess ahead of Belgian ace Tom Boonen.

However the 33-year-old Texan, who led his Discovery Channel team to a rather lucky victory in the team time trial on Tuesday, will be hard pushed to be as calm when the race goes over some tricky terrain this weekend.

Armstrong's team handed him the yellow jersey only after a dramatic crash involving the CSC team's time trial specialist David Zabriskie on Tuesday.

The 26-year-old was wearing the yellow jersey at the time, and ended up losing it by two seconds after he rode lamely over the finish line dripping blood from various cuts on his body.

On Wednesday Armstrong spent his first time in the race lead, but the American—who seems to provoke either love or hatred in the peloton—appeared at the start line not wearing it, apparently in a bid to pay homage to Zabriskie.

The sporting gesture has been made before on the race, the last time being when another American, Greg Lemond, refused to wear the yellow jersey in 1991 after Denmark's Rolf Sorensen crashed 10 kilometers from the finish line in one of the early stages.

On that occasion and despite Lemond being second in the general classification, race organizers allowed the American his request not to wear the jersey as a mark of respect for Sorensen, who had to abandon the race. *AFP*

Enduro Light Adventures final call

MINDANAO CYCLING CLASSIC: Champion Robert Villaber of Talisay, Cebu, with second placer Guino-o Kennedy of Davao City and Giovanni Delica of Cebu City after ruling the third Rev. Mike Keyes Mindanao Cycling Classic over the weekend. Ozamis Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog (second from left) poses with the winners along with race director Franklin Gonzalez, Keyes, PhilCycling's Pepe Chavez and vice president for Mindanao Jojo Villa.

THE ENDURO San Mig Light Adventures 2005, which flags off on July 16 in Baguio City, is sounding off its last call for interested participants.

There will be briefing at the Aresis Restaurant at SM City Baguio, from 9 a.m. to noon for the Novice Category entries, and from 1-5 p.m. for the Elite Category racers, to determine whether they have the strength for the rigid and daunting task awaiting them.

During the briefing, the entries' equipment will also be checked to help ensure the safety of the participants.

All the teams–each composed of three persons one of whom should be male or female—will start from a designated point at SM City Baguio and will go through all stations, some by sequence and others by a non-sequential system, and must arrive at the finish line before the cut-off period.

A total of 45 elite and novice teams will test their skills and stamina as they go through diverse challenges in the demanding terrain of Baguio.

Interested participants have until this week to register. For inquiries, call the Enduro hotline at (63) 4141489 or visit www.sanmiglight.com.ph for details.

The winning team in the Elite Category will take home P25,000.

The Novice Category champion team will get a cash prize of P10,000.

Is James Yap enjoying 'undue' advantage?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THERE is no question that the Philippine Basketball Association is worthy of praise for honoring the league's most outstanding players of the year, but in the spirit of fairness and equality it should revise its format allowing the players of four sister teams—San Miguel Beer, Coca-Cola, Barangay Ginebra and Purefoods—to vote separately in the frantic race to select the PBA Most Valuable Player, Rookie of the Year and Best Import.

For example, in this year's Rookie derby, James Yap of Purefoods is perceived as enjoying an advantage over Rich Alvarez of Shell in players' vote because the TJ Hotdogs swingman is expected to get the votes from players of Purefoods' sister teams.

In my view, this setup, where one company controls too many teams in the PBA, is not good for the league.

"It's looking monopolistic," former PBA chair and Alaska team owner Wilfred Uytengsu once said following the transfer of the Pop Cola franchise (now the Coca-Cola team) to San Miguel Corp., raising the number of PBA teams owned by SMC to four.

As a result, this one-sided setup has generated many criticisms. Many say the league's integrity could be cast under a big cloud of doubt and the fans' confidence could be eroded.

I'm not privy to the selection format, but it is in the best interest of the organization if the PBA pashas limit the votes of the four sister teams in future conferences. This will at least level the playing field and make everybody happy.

In the current ROY derby, the 6-foot-3 Alvarez is not only leading in the statistical race but his overall record is better than those of the other contenders such as Yap, Joachim Thoss (Alaska), Yap's Purefoods' teammate Paul Artadi; and Ranidel de Ocampo (FedEx).

An all-around player and two-time UAAP Most Valuable Player, Alvarez, a former Ateneo Blue Eagle, was simply dominant in the 2004 Philippine Cup, 2004 Fiesta Conference and the ongoing 2005 Fiesta Conference, where the Turbo Chargers beat the TJ Hotdogs in a best-of-three series for a spot in the semifinals.

* * *

ATHLETES SUFFER. Of course, the International Basketball Federation (Fiba) suspension of the Philippines was a big blow to everybody. But more than that, it is the players who will suffer the most as they will be deprived of the golden opportunity to play for flag and country in international competitions.

The suspension, spawned by the controversy between the Philippine Olympic Committee and the Basketball Association of the Philippines, would not have been imposed on the Philippines had IOC representative to the Philippines Frank Elizalde only took the time to mediate at the first sign of trouble.

But Elizalde, who spends much time traveling abroad to attend IOC meetings, did not make his presence felt during the raging dispute even though it involved members of the Olympic family.

Being the eyes and ears of the IOC in the Philippines, Elizalde could have provided the mature leadership and guidance to these bullheaded sports officials, most of whom, by the way, are politicians.

At any rate, what is important now is for the feuding groups to settle their problems and pave the way for the country's reinstatement in the Fiba. We can't waste much time by finger pointing and blaming each other.

Milo CdO race fires off Sunday

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—More than 11,000 runners from this city and from Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental and Camiguin are expected to crowd the starting area of the 29th Milo Marathon Region 10 Northern Mindanao elimination race Sunday at the Pelaez Sports Center.

Juniel Languido and Aileen Tolentino, who are seeking their third straight regional crowns this year, are expected to vie for the six slots—three for men and three for women—to the national finals slated Oct. 9 in Metro Manila.

Languido is expected to get a tough challenge from Roger Sawin-ay whom he had barely defeated here last year. Sawin-ay fell just 26 seconds short to dethroning Languido in last year's 21-K race. Tolentino is likewise expected to be challenged by sister Ellen, whom she beat by a mere eight seconds here two years ago.

The other runners to watch on Sunday are Jaime Canillo and Ronillo Sandinao in the men's and Niecel Topia and Helen Tacling in the distaff side.

The annual foot race is held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel, adidas, Cebu Pacific, Smart Kid, Department of Tourism, Addict Mobile Prepaid and Powerbar.

Misamis Oriental Gov. Oscar S. Moreno will fire the starting gun to set off the runners from Velez Street, which will be closed to give way to the marathon.

Also expected to grace the occasion are Jesus L. Taberdo, regional director of the education department in Region 10, Trina Abola, Nestlé Phils. regional sales manager, Pat Goc Ong, Milo sports events executive and marathon organizer Rudy Biscocho.

The top finishers in the 21-K race will bring home a trophy and a P10,000 cash purse each.

La Salle captures V-League crown

From page A22

this series," said De Jesus.

In the end, La Salle easily handled UST's attacks anchored on Roxanne Pimentel, Joyce Pano, Balse and Venus Bernal with ease.

On the other hand, UST had trouble all day containing Carolino, Santos and conference MVP Maureen Penetrante, who kept firing from all sides of the court through the masterful set-ups by Ferina Saet. The stocky Saet fittingly took home the league's Best Setter award.

Earlier, San Sebastian annexed third place with a 17-25, 25-23, 25-21, 25-20 win over Ateneo. Cherry Rose Macatangay scored 30 points for the Lady Stags and took home the Best Scorer plum.

Carolino scored all of her 17 points on kills, including a bomb she detonated from the center to halt UST's 9-2 comeback and give La Salle a 23-19 buffer in the fourth set.

Penetrante had 16 points, 12 on attacks, while Santos chipped in 10 points in the match that lasted one hour and 51 minutes.

Other awardees were Ateneo's Michelle Laborte (Best Blocker), Balse (Best Server), FEU's Genelyn Alemania (Best Digger) and La Salle's Shermaine Miles Penano (Best Receiver).

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
6th floor Shangri-la Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: 633.2227 / 6337851 loc. 171
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR GP
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR GP
3 (DOLBY) MONSTER IN LAW PG13
4 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 (SDDS) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS) WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 (GOLD DTS) BATMAN BEGINS
5 (GOLD DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
6 (GOLD SDDS) FANTASTIC FOUR
7 (GOLD DOLBY) HOTEL RWANDA
8 MONSTER IN LAW
9 CREEP
10 NASAAN KA MAN

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 MONSTER IN LAW

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 MONSTER IN LAW

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 SHUTTER
3 (DOLBY) MR. & MRS. SMITH

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 HITCH HIKER'S GUIDE
2 RING OF NIBELUNGS
3 (DOLBY) MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 MONSTER IN LAW
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Blue Wave MARQUINTON
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341924
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 (DOLBY) CREEP
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) SOON TO OPEN
2 SOON TO OPEN
3 SOON TO OPEN
4 SOON TO OPEN
5 SOON TO OPEN

Universal (Manila) tel: 7334043 or 2470
1 FANTASTIC FOUR

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 MONSTER IN LAW
4 CREEP

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 KALAPATI SA GABI
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) FANTASTIC FOUR
5 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 KALAPATI SA GABI

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 KALAPATI SA GABI
2 CREEP
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
6 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS EX) SHUTTER
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

Cine Nepo (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 PREMONITION
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR

Cine Nepo (Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 SHUTTER
3 (DOLBY) HITCH HIKER'S GUIDE
4 (DTS) MR. & MRS. SMITH

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007
1 (DOLBY) BATMAN BEGINS
2 RESERVED

Centre Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 HAPPILY EVER AFTER

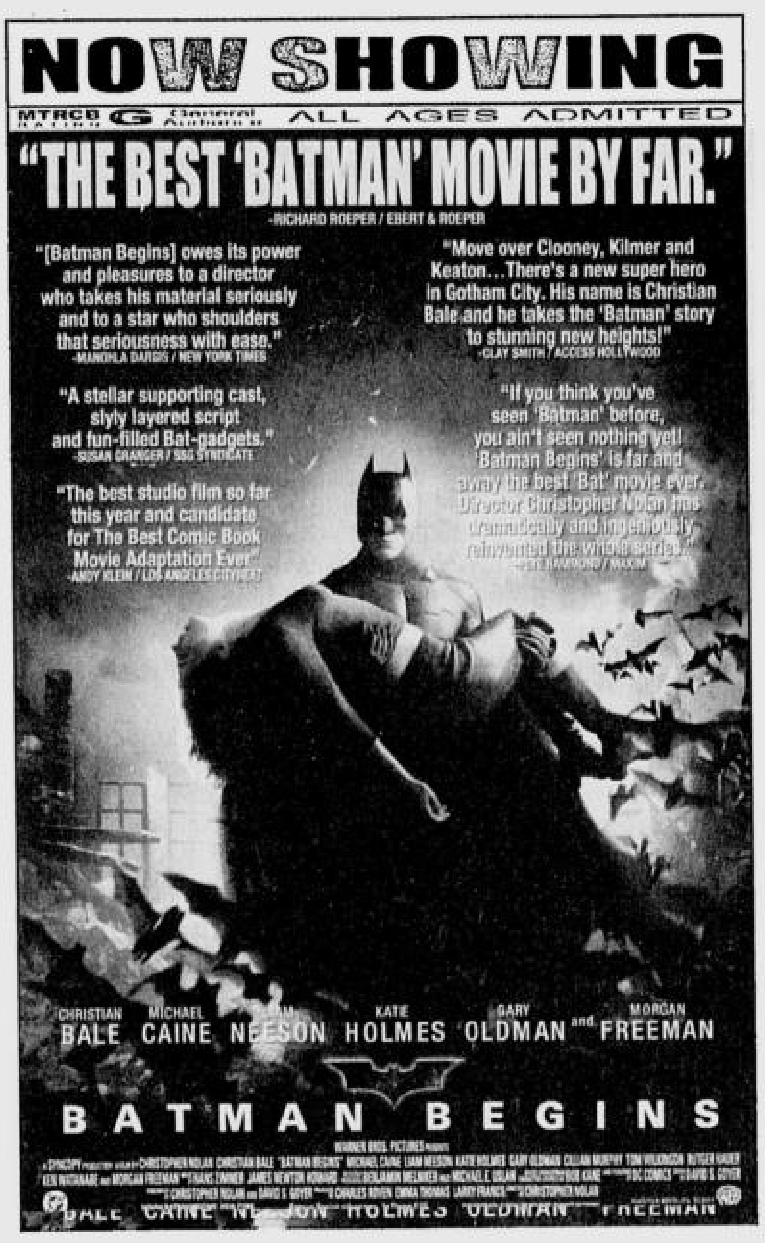
Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) BATMAN BEGINS
2 KALAPATI SA GABI
3 LARO SA BAGA
4 (DTS) CREEP

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS) SHUTTER
4 MONSTER IN LAW
5 LARO SA BAGA

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 SHAOLIN VS' EVIL DEAD
4 TAGOS SA LAMAN

Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 KALAPATI SA GABI
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING G General Audience ALL AGES ADMITTED
"THE BEST 'BATMAN' MOVIE BY FAR."
-RICHARD ROEPER / EBERT & ROEPER
"[Batman Begins] owes its power and pleasures to a director who takes his material seriously and to a star who shoulders that seriousness with ease."
-MANOHLA DARGIS / NEW YORK TIMES
"A stellar supporting cast, slyly layered script and fun-filled Bat-gadgets."
-SUSAN GRANGER / SSG SYNDICATE
"The best studio film so far this year and candidate for The Best Comic Book Movie Adaptation Ever"
-ANDY KLEIN / LOS ANGELES CITYBEAT
"Move over Clooney, Kilmer and Keaton...There's a new super hero in Gotham City. His name is Christian Bale and he takes the 'Batman' story to stunning new heights!"
-CLAY SMITH / ACCESS HOLLYWOOD
"If you think you've seen 'Batman' before, you ain't seen nothing yet! 'Batman Begins' is far and away the best 'Bat' movie ever. Director Christopher Nolan has dramatically and ingeniously reinvented the whole series."
CHRISTIAN BALE MICHAEL CAINE LIAM NEESON KATIE HOLMES GARY OLDMAN and MORGAN FREEMAN
BATMAN BEGINS

Araneta Center Leisure Guide

MENAGE SALON
NOW OPEN
at Level 3, Gateway Mall

CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway Cineplex 10
LEVEL 4, GATEWAY MALL
ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P140 WAR OF THE WORLDS
BATMAN BEGINS & FANTASTIC 4
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

MR & MRS SMITH
1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
WAR OF THE WORLDS
1:20 / 2:10 / 4:10 / 5:00 / 7:00 / 7:50 / 9:50
MONSTER IN LAW
12:45 / 3:15 / 5.50 / 8:30
FANTASTIC FOUR
12:10 / 12:50 / 1:30 / 3:00
3:40 / 4:20 / 5:50 / 6:30
7:10 / 8:40 / 9:20 / 10:00
BATMAN BEGINS
1:00 / 3:50 / 6:40 / 9:30
CREEP
12:35 / 2:45 / 4:55 / 7:05 / 9:15

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
ADMISSION · P 299 / Globe Platinum Subscribers P249
FANTASTIC FOUR
1:30 / 4:20 / 7:10 / 10:00

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ FANTASTIC FOUR 12:30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00
❷ WAR OF THE WORLDS 11:30 / 1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50
❸ BATMAN BEGINS 12:20 / 3:00 / 5:40 / 8:20
❹ KALAPATI SA GABI 12:00 / 2:05 / 4:10 / 6:15 / 8:20
❺ CREEP 11:30 / 1:40 / 3:50 / 6:00 / 8:10
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
2005 PBA CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS GAME 4
July 8, Friday 7:30pm Talk N Text vs San Miguel
July 10, Sunday UAAP GAMES 10am AdU vs NU Jrs, 12nn DLSU vs ADMU Jrs 2pm AdU vs NU Srs 4pm DLSU vs ADMU Srs
UAAP OPENING CEREMONIES - GAMES
July 9, Sat. 1pm Opening / 2pm UP vs UST Srs/ 4pm FEU vs UE Srs
JOHN MAXWELL ASIAN TOUR 2005
July 22 Friday 6:00 pm

CENTER EVENTS
NEW STORES: *Shiseido at Level 2 and Teriyaki Boy at Level 3 of Gateway Mall Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf at the Gateway Cineplex 10 Lobby*
PERFORMANCES: *Cadio on July 8, Tropicana on July 9 & Tots Tolentino on July 10 at the Gateway Roxas Tunnel*
EXHIBIT: *Herbie: Fully Loaded life-size replica on display ongoing until July 13 at the Gateway Cineplex 10 Lobby*
SPECIAL APPEARANCE: *Neil Gaiman Book Signing on July 11, 4pm at Fully Booked on Level 2 of Gateway Mall*
LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs old will be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
THIS SEMESTER, SOME ANGRY SOULS ARE ALSO ENROLLED...PAPASOK KA BA SA HAUNTED SCHOOL?

FROM THE MAKERS OF "THE RING" COMES A NEW HORROR PHENOMENON.
Psyhic horror happens in the most unlikely place... the school. Students take note!
CAMPUS GHOST STORIES
Starring KOJI MATSUO YUICHI MATSUO HITOMI MIWA ASUMI MIWA
Directed by TOSHIHARU IKEDA
MAGPAPARAMDAM SILA SA HULYO 13!

3rd Manila Marathon set July 24

THE 3RD Manila Marathon fires off on July 24 at the Rizal Park with thousands of entries expected.

Arnold "Ali" Atienza, chair of the organizing Manila Sports Council (Masco), said the event will be for fun runners, fitness and sports buffs, as well as competitive marathoners.

"We see an even bigger Manila Marathon this year and the event is expected to lure more local runners from all walks of life," said the son of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

Last year, an estimated 40,000 participants saw action in what is now known as the biggest one-time gathering of runners in local soil. It is envisioned to create awareness in rallying support for Filipino athletes competing in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

The race will pierce through the main thoroughfares and commercial and historical districts of the country's premiere city from Tondo, Quiapo, Binondo, Sampaloc, Sta. Ana, Paco, Singalong, San Andres, Malate and back to the Rizal Park.

Registration for the event, backed by Nike, Pagcor, PCSO, Red Bull, Milo, San Miguel Corp. and Concept Movers, is now ongoing at the Masco offices at the 5th floor of the Manila City Hall and at the San Andres Sports and Recreation Center in Malate.

Top honors to be disputed are in the 42-km full marathon, 10-km, 5-km, Media 5-km, Celebrity 5-km, and Differently abled 3-km races, which will feature men and women categories, and the 15-under Kids 3-km fun run.

Mayor Atienza will lead the runners when they are flagged off at Roxas Boulevard and will be joined by city luminaries, representatives from the city's 897 barangays and six congressional districts, top sports officials, and heads of various national sports associations.

Phone Pals out to pull . . .

From page A21

Game 2 to slip into 0-2 hole.

TNT bounced back in Game 3 as player of the conference Willie Miller and best import Jerald Honeycutt justified their awards.

"They're capable of getting back into the series so it came as no surprise when they played like there was no more tomorrow in Game 3," said San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico.

"We'll come up with the needed adjustments in Game 4."

Vic Pablo, Donbel Belano, Harvey Carey, Mark Telan, Asi Taulava and Jimmy Alapag provided solid backup that prevented Talk 'N Text from falling into a deep 0-3 pit.

"Everybody wants to do something to win. We're bleeding and our goal is learn how to beat San Miguel," said Banal. "If we can match up with their intensity and grit for 48 minutes, then we have a chance."

Banal believed that San Miguel Beer's eagerness to grab a 3-0 lead in the series spelled its doom in Game 3.

Though Ace Custis, Danny Ildefonso, Nic Belasco and Dorian remained consistent, the backcourt of the Beermen faltered with Olsen Racela nursing a flu and Dondon Hontiveros shooting 0 of 5 from three-point range.

"They wanted Game 3 so much they're overdoing things. If they play on the right level in Game 4, then it's going to be down-the-wire," said Banal. *June Navarro*

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 FANTASTIC FOUR
MTRCB GP
12.10, 2.40, 5.10, 7:40, 10:10 LMF

2 FANTASTIC FOUR
MTRCB GP
11:10, 1.40, 4.10, 6.40, 9.10 LMF

3 MONSTER IN LAW
MTRCB PG-13
11 35, 2 00, 4.25, 6.50, 9:15

4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
MTRCB. PG-13
12 00, 2.30, 5 00, 7 30, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE FANTASTIC FOUR
MTRCB GP

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

Get your tickets to
FANTASTIC FOUR
in advance starting July 1, 2005
No extra service fee.
Regular screening begins July 6, 2005

Regular Ticket Price
Cinemas 1 to 4 - P150
Premiere Theatre - P295 (includes unlimited popcorn and beverages)
Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2287 / 633-4736 for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

ADVANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE FOR FANTASTIC FOUR

For inquiries, call
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:20, 3:00, 5:40
8:20, 11:00
PG-13

2 FANTASTIC FOUR
11:00, 1:40, 7:00, 9:30
GP

3 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:20, 3:00, 5:40
8:20, 11:00
GP

4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
11:40, 2:20, 5:00
7:40, 10:20
PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13 1:40,4:10,6:40,9:10	FANTASTIC 4 GP 11:55,2:25,4:55,7:25,9:55	FANTASTIC 4 GP 11:20,1:50,4:20,6:50,9:20
WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13 12:20,2:50,5:20,7:50,10:20	MONSTER IN LAW PG13 1:20,3:30,5:50,8:10,10:20	FANTASTIC 4 GP 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30

2nd WEEK
MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13 | children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
Find out why this film has become the Talk-of-the-Town
Jane Fonda
Michael Vartan
Jennifer Lopez
MONSTER-in-LAW
THE YEAR'S #1 ROMANTIC COMEDY

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
PG13
11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10

CINEMA 2 FANTASTIC 4
GP
11:15, 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND • EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 WAR OF THE WORLDS
PG13
12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10

CINEMA 4 FANTASTIC 4
GP
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

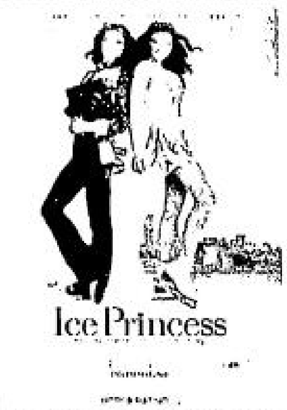
CINEMA 5 FANTASTIC 4
GP
10:30, 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM
JULY 29 & 30 SOULSISTERS (Jessa, Marissa & Ara) 8PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

Experience SM CINEMA
movietime
movie schedules events promos

Here are the results for the last week's poll!
"What movies are you into?"
TOP FIVE MOVIES
• Monster-in-law ★★★★★
• War of the worlds ★★★★
• Horbie Fully Loaded ★★★★
• Fantastic Four ★★★
• Happily Ever After ★★★



Ice Princess

A Special Back-to-School Presentation
An Inspiring story about following your own dreams
Ice Princess
Big things happen to those who dream big.
Watch it EXCLUSIVELY at
SM Manila
today!
Wave 89.1
Official Radio Partner

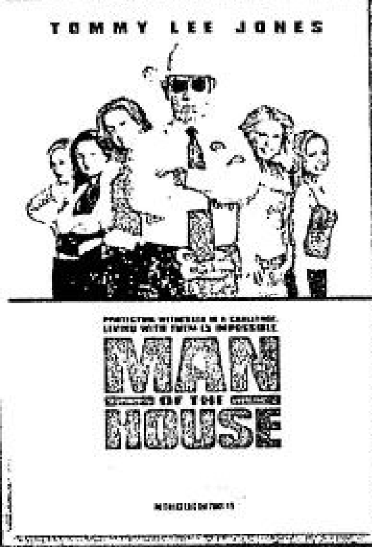
FOR GUARANTEED SEATS

the podium 633-8976
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
11:50FS/12:20MF/02:40/05:00/07:20
09:05LFS/09:40LMF/11:25END
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
01:00FS/01:30MF/03:45/06:00/08:15
10:00LFS/10:30LMF/12:15END

megamall 633-1901
BATMAN BEGINS
12:10FS/12:40MF/03:40/06:40/
09:00LFS/09:40LMF/12:00END

cebu (032) 231-3876
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:00FS/12:30MF/02:40/04:50/07:00
08:55LFS/09:15LFS/11:05END
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
11:40FS/11:50MF/02:15/04:40/07:05
09:05LFS/09:30LMF/11:30END
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
10:40FS/10:50MF/01:00/03:10/05:20/07:30
09:25LFS/09:40LMF/11:35END

FEEL EXCLUSIVE Now SHOWING EXCLUSIVELY at SM CINEMA



TOMMY LEE JONES
MAN OF THE HOUSE

Witness this hilarious comedy about a Texan ranger teamed up with cheerleaders!
Watch it EXCLUSIVELY at
SM Southmall
today!
WAVE 89.1

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 MR. & MRS. SMITH
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
7 WAR OF THE WORLDS
8 MONSTER-IN-LAW
9 CREEP
10 FANTASTIC FOUR
11 NASAAN KA MAN
12 HAPPILY EVER AFTER

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
HOTEL RWANDA
FANTASTIC FOUR
3 SHUTTER
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
NASAAN KA MAN
6 MR. & MRS. SMITH
FANTASTIC FOUR
8 BATMAN BEGINS
9 MONSTER-IN-LAW
HAPPILY EVER AFTER
WAR OF THE WORLDS
CREEP

SM NORTH EDSA
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 MONSTER-IN-LAW
4 BATMAN BEGINS
WAR OF THE WORLDS
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

SM CITY MANILA
WAR OF THE WORLDS
MR. & MRS. SMITH
3 ICE PRINCESS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR
MONSTER-IN-LAW
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
WAR OF THE WORLDS
BATMAN BEGINS
9 NASAAN KA MAN
CREEP
SHUTTER
HAPPILY EVER AFTER

SM CITY STA MESA
WAR OF THE WORLDS
BATMAN BEGINS
FANTASTIC FOUR
CREEP
FANTASTIC FOUR
6 PREMONITION
NASAAN KA MAN
HOTEL RWANDA
9 MONSTER-IN-LAW
10 MR. & MRS. SMITH

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 CREEP
3 WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR
5 NASAAN KA MAN
6 MR. & MRS. SMITH
7 HAPPILY EVER AFTER
8 BATMAN BEGINS
9 MONSTER-IN-LAW
10 MAN OF THE HOUSE

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
RESERVED
RESERVED
RESERVED
4 RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 CREEP
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

SM CITY BICUTAN
FANTASTIC FOUR
WAR OF THE WORLDS
BATMAN BEGINS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
FANTASTIC FOUR
3 NASAAN KA MAN
4 HAPPILY EVER AFTER
HOTEL RWANDA
WAR OF THE WORLDS

SM CITY BACOOR
MONSTER-IN-LAW
HAPPILY EVER AFTER
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 BATMAN BEGINS
FANTASTIC FOUR
6 WAR OF THE WORLDS
NASAAN KA MAN
MR. & MRS. SMITH

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
HOTEL RWANDA
3 MONSTER-IN-LAW
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY LUCENA
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 UNLEASHED
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
3 WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY MARILAO
FANTASTIC FOUR
WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 COACH CARTER
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY BATANGAS
WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 SHUTTER
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 SIN CITY

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

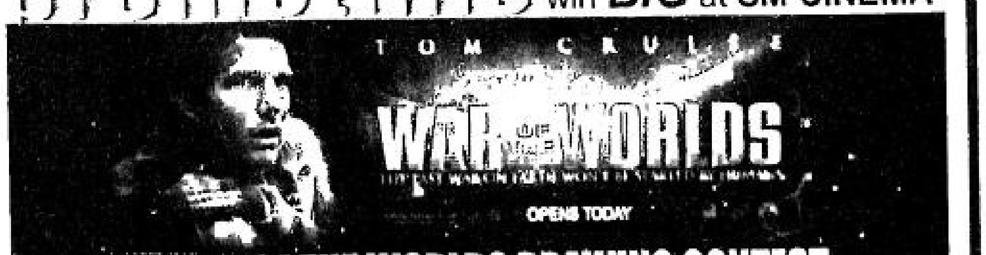
SM CITY CEBU
FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
FANTASTIC FOUR
BATMAN BEGINS
5 BIRTH
6 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE
MR. & MRS. SMITH
8 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY ILOILO
FANTASTIC FOUR
RESERVED
3 WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 PREMONITION
5 A LOT LIKE LOVE
FANTASTIC FOUR
7 RESERVED
8 BATMAN BEGINS

SM CITY DAVAO
FANTASTIC FOUR
THE JACKET
HAPPILY EVER AFTER
4 COACH CARTER
WAR OF THE WORLDS
6 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
FANTASTIC FOUR
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
FANTASTIC FOUR
WAR OF THE WORLDS

promotime win BIG at SM CINEMA



TOM CRUISE
WAR OF THE WORLDS
OPENS TODAY

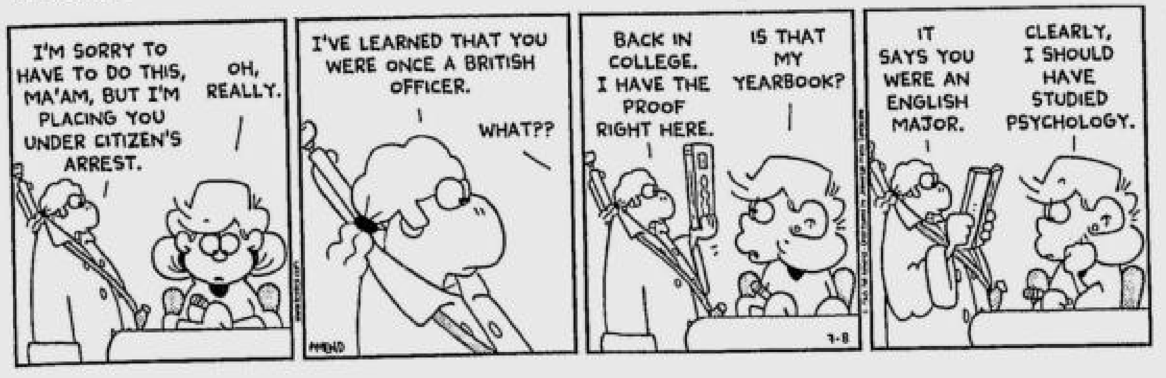
THE WAR OF THE WORLDS DRAWING CONTEST
Imagine if aliens would invade over the Earth and destroy mankind.
Put that creative idea of yours into a vivid artwork, whether a sketch, painting, collage, computerized image, or any other creative idea you may conceive.
You may submit your entries through e-mail at
moviesaddicts_smcinema@yahoo.com
or give it personally at your nearest SM Cinema branch. Lucky winners will get their artwork published on this space and will win special prizes from United International Pictures.
THIS CONTEST IS EXTENDED UNTIL JULY 12, 2005

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA
CALL NOW 833-9999 CLICK AWAY www.smcinema.com

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
ComicRelief
e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph
FRIDAY, JULY 8, 2005

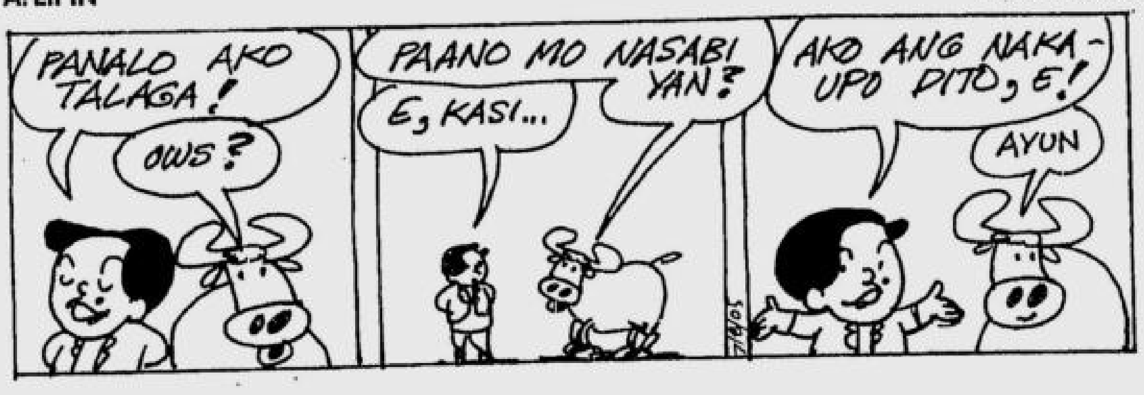
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


I'M SORRY TO HAVE TO DO THIS, MA'AM, BUT I'M PLACING YOU UNDER CITIZEN'S ARREST.
OH, REALLY.
I'VE LEARNED THAT YOU WERE ONCE A BRITISH OFFICER.
WHAT??
BACK IN COLLEGE. I HAVE THE PROOF RIGHT HERE.
IS THAT MY YEARBOOK?
IT SAYS YOU WERE AN ENGLISH MAJOR.
CLEARLY, I SHOULD HAVE STUDIED PSYCHOLOGY.
AMEND
7-8

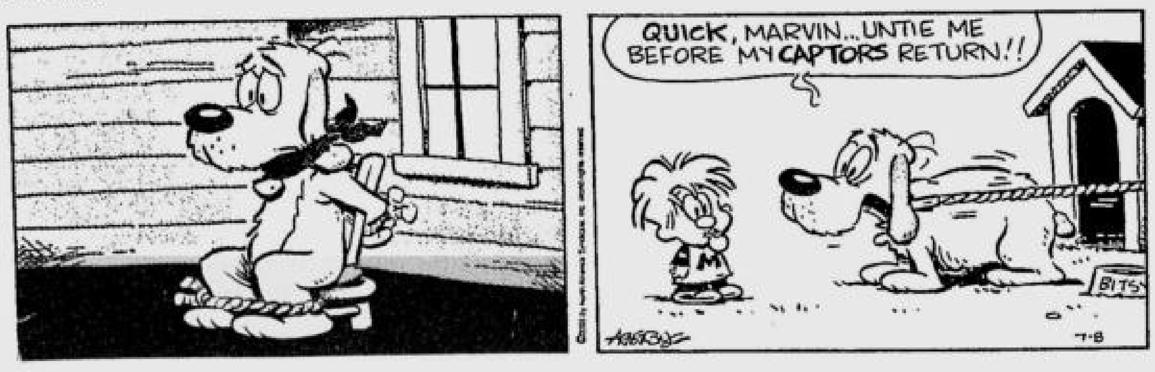
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PANALO AKO TALAGA!
OWS?
PAANO MO NASABI YAN?
E, KASI...
AKO ANG NAKA-UPO DITO, E!
AYUN
7/8/05

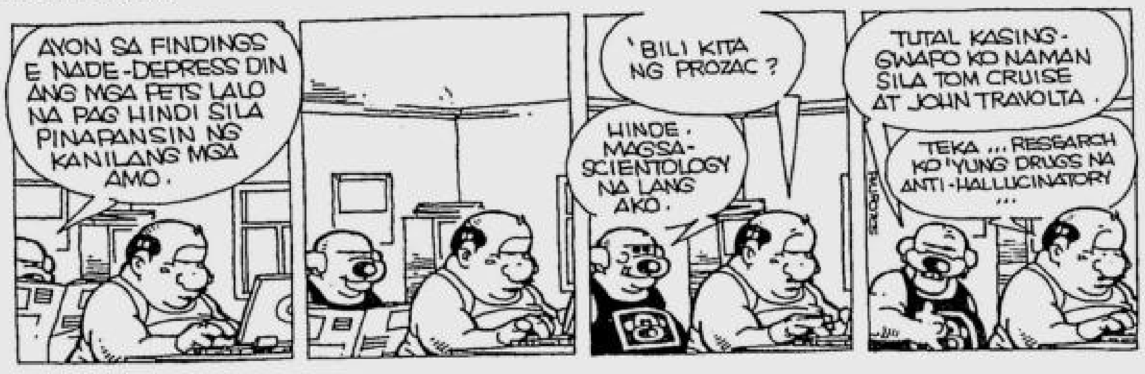
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


QUICK, MARVIN...UNTIE ME BEFORE MY CAPTORS RETURN!!
BITSY
7-8

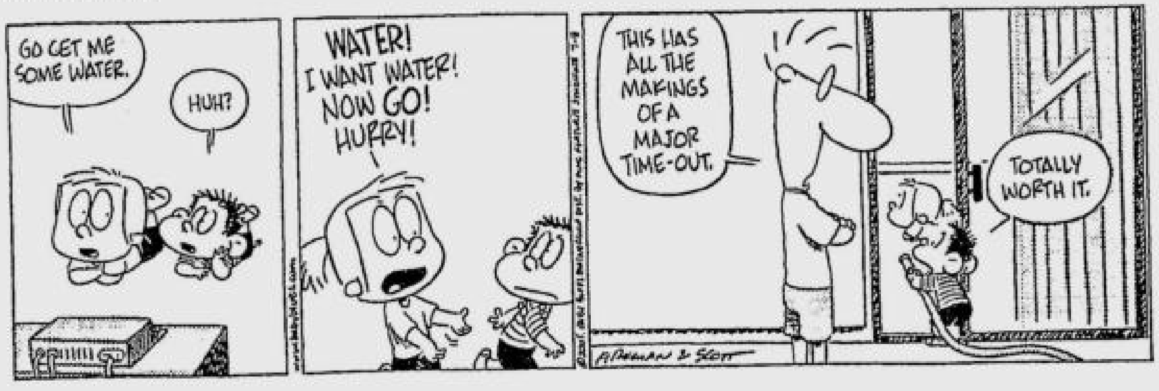
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


AYON SA FINDINGS E NADE-DEPRESS DIN ANG MGA PETS LALO NA PAG HINDI SILA PINAPANSIN NG KANILANG MGA AMO.
'BILI KITA NG PROZAC?
HINDE. MAGSA-SCIENTOLOGY NA LANG AKO.
TUTAL KASING-GWAPO KO NAMAN SILA TOM CRUISE AT JOHN TRAVOLTA.
TEKA ... RESEARCH KO 'YUNG DRUGS NA ANTI-HALLUCINATORY ...

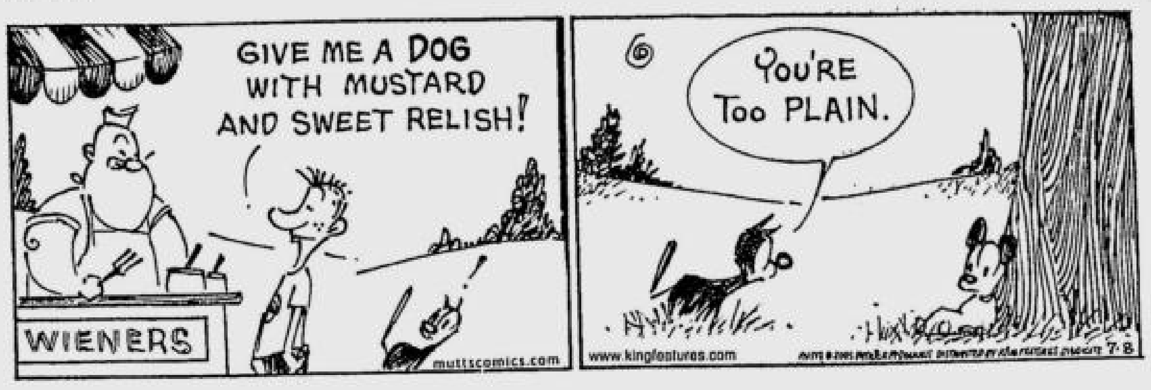
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


GO GET ME SOME WATER.
HUH?
WATER! I WANT WATER! NOW GO! HURRY!
THIS HAS ALL THE MAKINGS OF A MAJOR TIME-OUT.
TOTALLY WORTH IT.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

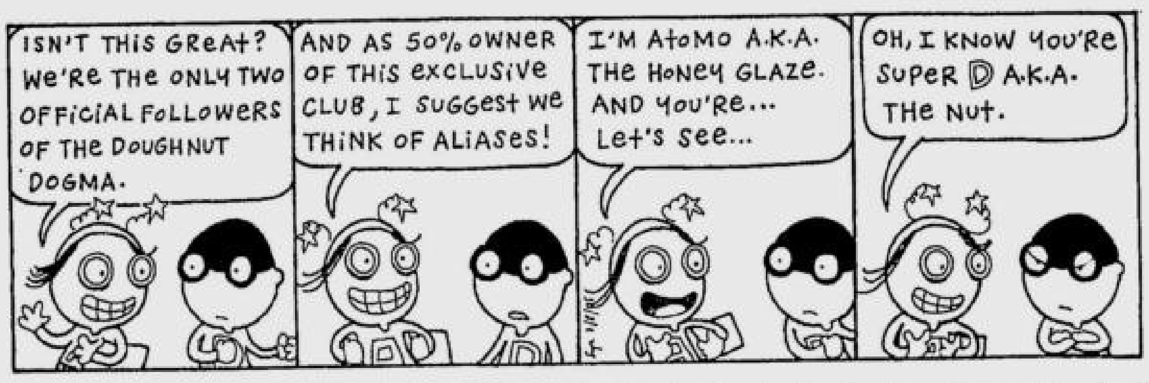
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


GIVE ME A DOG WITH MUSTARD AND SWEET RELISH!
WIENERS
muttscomics.com
YOU'RE TOO PLAIN.
www.kingfeatures.com
7-8

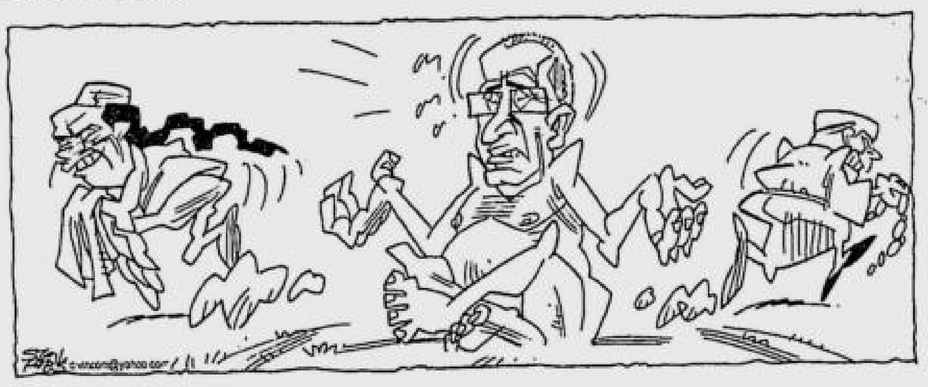
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


ISN'T THIS GREAT? WE'RE THE ONLY TWO OFFICIAL FOLLOWERS OF THE DOUGHNUT DOGMA.
AND AS 50% OWNER OF THIS EXCLUSIVE CLUB, I SUGGEST WE THINK OF ALIASES!
I'M ATOMO A.K.A. THE HONEY GLAZE. AND YOU'RE... LET'S SEE...
OH, I KNOW YOU'RE SUPER D A.K.A. THE NUT.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HINDI NA NAPANSIN NG DALAI LAMA NA NINAKAWAN NA PALA SIYA NG DAMIT AT KWINTAS DAHIL SA LALIM NG KANYANG MEDITATION

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You need the love and security of family and home. You're very sensitive. Because of this, you need an understanding partner. Personally, you are a perfectionist. You know how to build a beautiful home for yourself. You definitely become more generous with time. Work hard this year to build something valuable for your future. Birthdate of: Kevin Bacon, actor; Anjelica Huston, actress; Toby Keith, country singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): A romantic day! It's also an excellent day to work with children. Everything having to do with professional sports, financial speculation and the arts is favored.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a homey, domestic kind of day. Attend to family matters. Talk to a parent. Buy something attractive for where you live.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your sixth sense is alive and well today. Trust your intuition when talking to others, especially siblings. If you have a hunch about something, act on it.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a good day for business, commerce and all kinds of financial matters. It's also a good day for shopping. You have money-making ideas, and you have plans for what to do with cash on hand!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Today the Moon, Mercury and Venus are all in your sign. The entire world is having a Leo hit! Everything seems to come your way.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You need some peace and quiet today. Work by yourself if you can, or get away for a little breather. Take a walk in a park or a drive in the country.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Discussions with friends, particularly younger or artistic friends, will please you today. You feel social and popular! You don't mind being the center of attention, as long as it's pleasant attention!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): If you have a crush on someone, it might be obvious to others today. Something about your dislikes and likes (and your desires) attracts public attention.

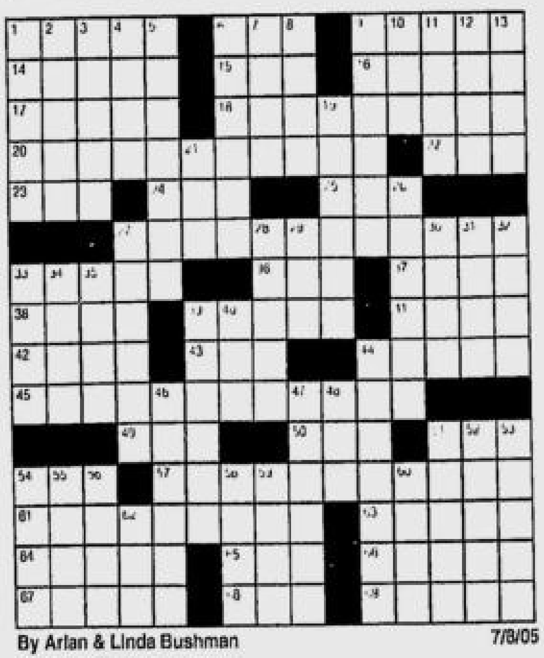
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Try to do anything different and out of the ordinary that intrigues you today. Shake up your daily routine. Go someplace you've never been.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Whatever happens today, you'll react more emotionally than usual. You might feel that others are particularly intense. Or could it be your reaction to them?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Now is the time to have that important discussion with a close friend or partner. Others are receptive to what you have to say, and vice versa.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Because you like what you're doing right now, you can accomplish a lot. Your positive frame of mind keeps you working with a smile on your face. And the more you work, the more you get done.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Arlan & Linda Bushman
Chicago, IL
7/8/05

ACROSS
1 Make by hand
6 Chew the fat
9 Form beads
14 Fence-clearing shot
15 Pamplona shout
16 Come to a consensus
17 Greek market
18 Frank and unreserved
20 No. 2 on the ticket
22 Glide on snow
23 Tilly or Ryan
24 Also
25 Exist
27 Charlie Watts or Ron Wood
33 Slack-jawed starer
36 Expected
37 Ship's company
38 Somewhat
39 Signifies
41 Attendee's answer
42 Brine-cured cheese
43 Cigar residue
44 Mexicali bread?
45 Panache
49 Trim (off)
50 High dudgeon
51 Pitches in print
54 Pol's provider
57 Stable outfit
61 Starting point
63 Circumvent
64 Osaka morsel
65 African grazer
66 Greek moralist
67 Spanish hors d'oeuvres
68 6th sense
69 Difficult journeys

DOWN
1 Bracelet dangler
2 Knave
3 Surrounded by
4 Seedless plant
5 Turncoat
6 Very large number
7 College grad
8 Alpha follower
9 Documents
10 Freudian concept
11 Refuges
12 Stink
13 Filmmaker Riefenstahl
19 Platforms
21 Lon __ of Cambodia
26 Engraves
27 Sell direct
28 Sun Valley state
29 Church sister
30 Mine loads
31 Stout's Wolfe
32 Woolly females
33 Fish-landing tool
34 Genesis name
35 Empathic emotion
39 Heckle or Jeckle, e.g.
40 Top left computer key
44 Warm beforehand
46 "Walker, Texas Ranger" star
47 Batting order
48 Common URL ending
51 Humble
52 Performed adequately
53 Stairs
54 Sibilant nudge
55 Bluish hue
56 Crescent end
58 Venetian notable
59 Traveler's stops
60 Assert positively
62 So that's it!

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

B	L	O	B		S	M	I	T	S		B	O	M	B
L	I	M	O		T	E	N	E	T		A	R	I	A
O	R	E	O		I	D	O	N	O	I	W	A	N	T
T	A	N	K		G	I	N		N	E	L	L	I	E
			L	A	M	A		I	I	X	L			
T	O	S	E	F	A	N		R	E	A	D	A	P	T
R	U	N	T	S			P	A	S	S		T	A	W
E	T	A	S		U	N	C	U	T		L	A	T	E
A	R	R		G	N	U	S			A	E	R	I	E
D	E	F	R	O	S	T		V	E	R	S	I	O	N
			A	L	A	S		E	M	U	S			
H	A	M	I	L	L		M	R	I		T	R	E	E
O	F	A	N	Y	T	H	I	N	G		H	U	N	G
A	R	I	E		E	R	R	O	R		A	L	D	O
R	O	D	S		D	E	A	N	E		N	E	S	S

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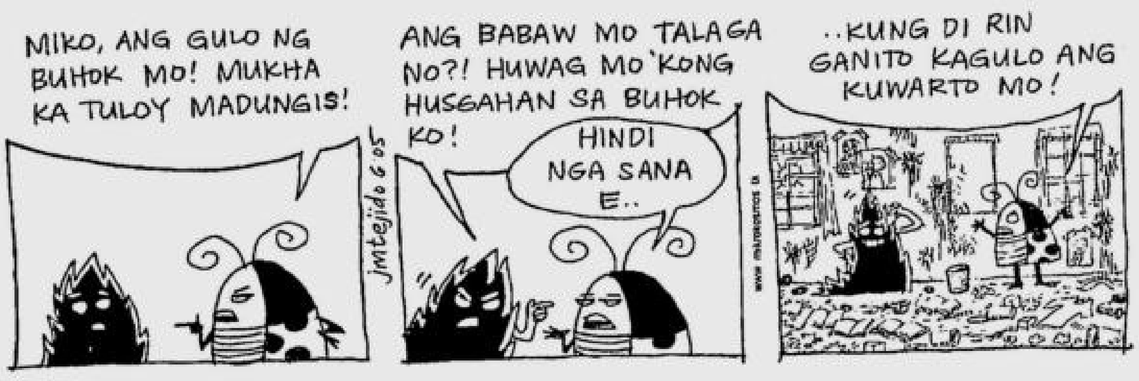
7/8/05

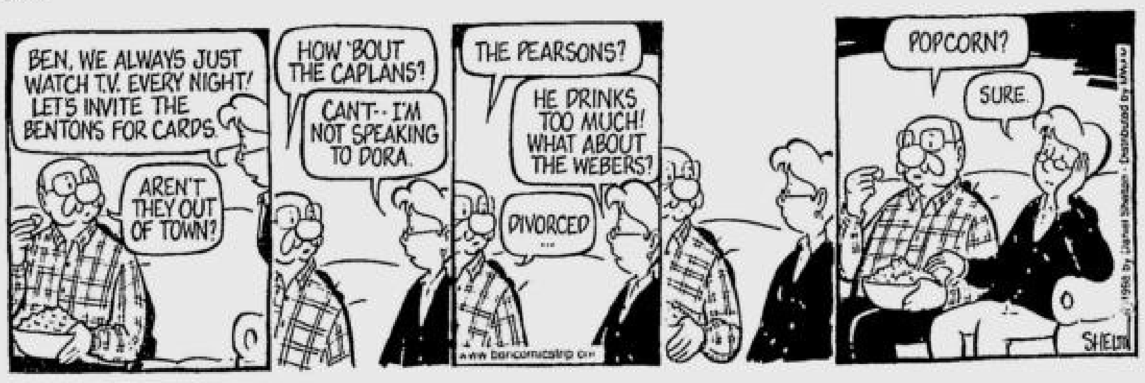
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MIKO, ANG GULO NG BUHOK MO! MUKHA KA TULOY MADUNGIS!
jmtejido 6.05
ANG BABAW MO TALAGA NO?! HUWAG MO 'KONG HUSGAHAN SA BUHOK KO!
HINDI NGA SANA E..
..KUNG DI RIN GANITO KAGULO ANG KUWARTO MO!

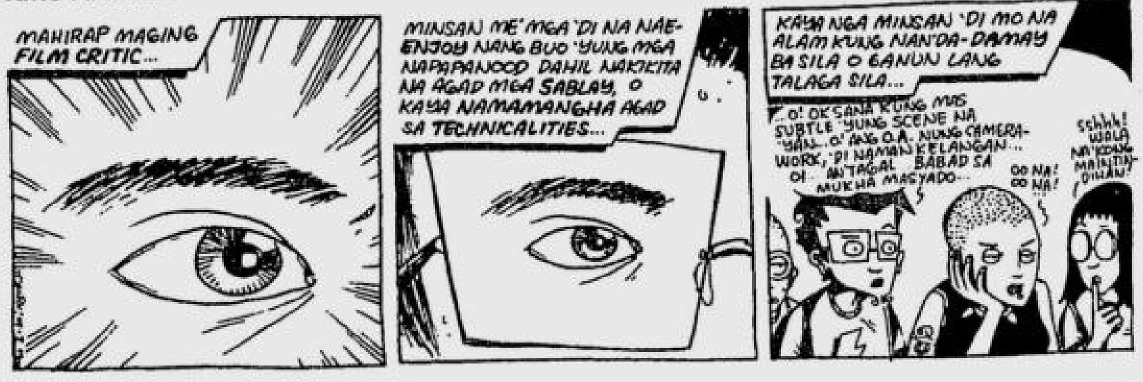
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN, WE ALWAYS JUST WATCH T.V. EVERY NIGHT! LET'S INVITE THE BENTONS FOR CARDS.
AREN'T THEY OUT OF TOWN?
HOW 'BOUT THE CAPLANS?
CAN'T - - I'M NOT SPEAKING TO DORA.
THE PEARSONS?
HE DRINKS TOO MUCH! WHAT ABOUT THE WEBERS?
DIVORCED ...
www.bencomicstrip.com
POPCORN?
SURE.
SHELTON

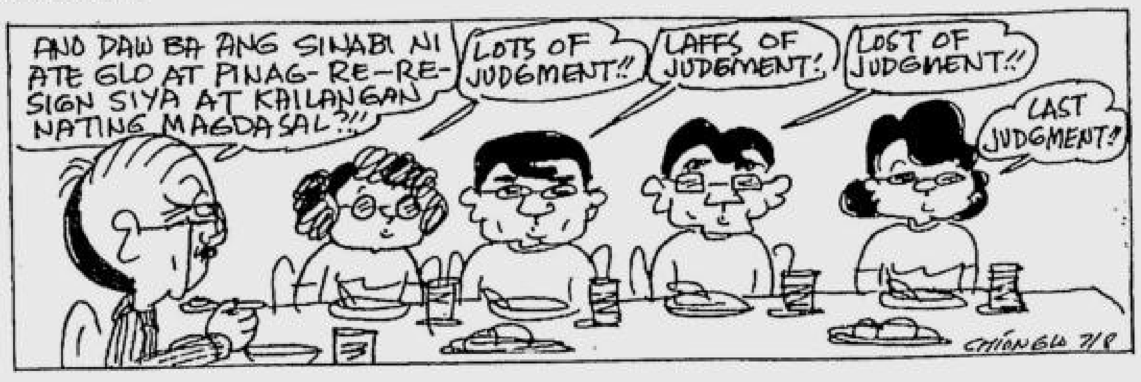
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


MAHIRAP MAGING FILM CRITIC...
MINSAN ME' MGA 'DI NA NAE-ENJOY NANG BUO 'YUNG MGA NAPAPANOOD DAHIL NAKIKITA NA AGAD MGA SABLAY, O KAYA NAMAMANGHA AGAD SA TECHNICALITIES...
KAYA NGA MINSAN 'DI MO NA ALAM KUNG NAN'DA-DAMAY BA SILA O GANUN LANG TALAGA SILA...
..O! OK SANA KUNG MAS SUBTLE 'YUNG SCENE NA 'YAN..O' ANG O.A. NUNG CAMERA-WORK, 'DI NAMAN KELANGAN... OI.. ANTAGAL BABAD SA MUKHA MASYADO...
OO NA! OO NA!
SSHHH! WALA NA 'KONG MAINTINDIHAN!

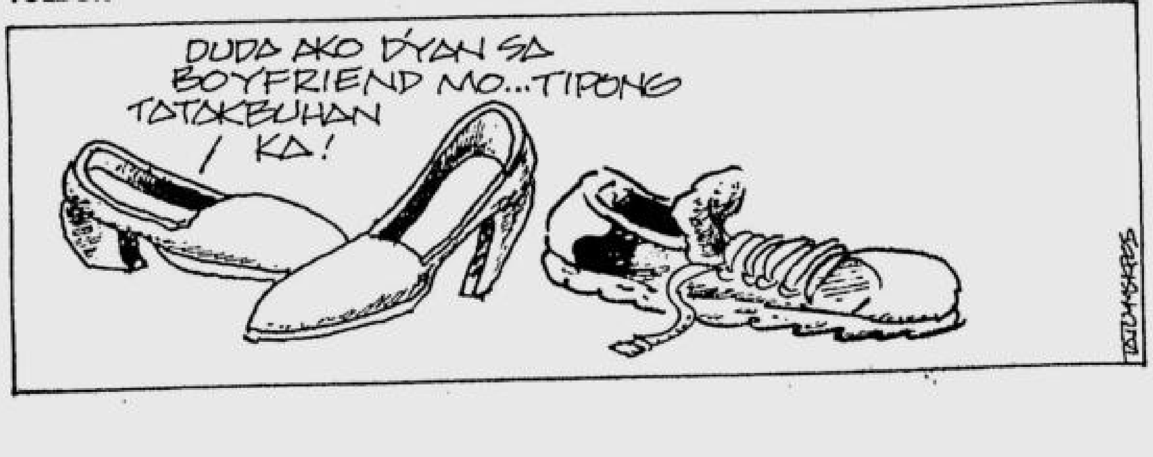
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANO DAW BA ANG SINABI NI ATE GLO AT PINAG-RE-RE-SIGN SIYA AT KAILANGAN NATING MAGDASAL?!!
LOTS OF JUDGMENT!!
LAFFS OF JUDGMENT!
LOST OF JUDGMENT!!
LAST JUDGMENT!
CHIONGLO 7/8

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DUDA AKO D'YAN SA BOYFRIEND MO...TIPONG TATAKBUHAN KA!

London revels in successful bid

LONDON—With headlines of "Humble Pie Monsieur?" the British media reveled on Thursday in London's successful bid to host the 2012 Olympics at the expense of rivals Paris and their President Jacques Chirac.

London beat the French favorites in one of the closest Olympic votes of all time, just as relations were deteriorating between Britain and France over comments attributed to Chirac criticizing British food.

In response, the Daily Express newspaper suggested Chirac should try Stuffed Frogs, Humble Pie, a chunk of Cold Shoulder and a medley of Green (with envy) Beans, while the Sun tabloid said Chirac had had his chips.

Crushed Garlic and Laughing Stock were also on several menus along with Raspberry Fool and Sour Grapes.

Paris had been the favorites throughout the bidding process and its officials were left stunned when International Olympic Committee president Jacques Rogge announced the result in a globally televised ceremony from Singapore. *Reuters*

Manalo . . .

From page A21

ling of Chinese Taipei, who upset Francisco "Django" Bustamante, 10-8, in the round of 64.

Valle, a former Asian Games gold medalist, was to face another Taiwanese, Chen Ying-chieh. If he wins, his next rival will be Manalo.

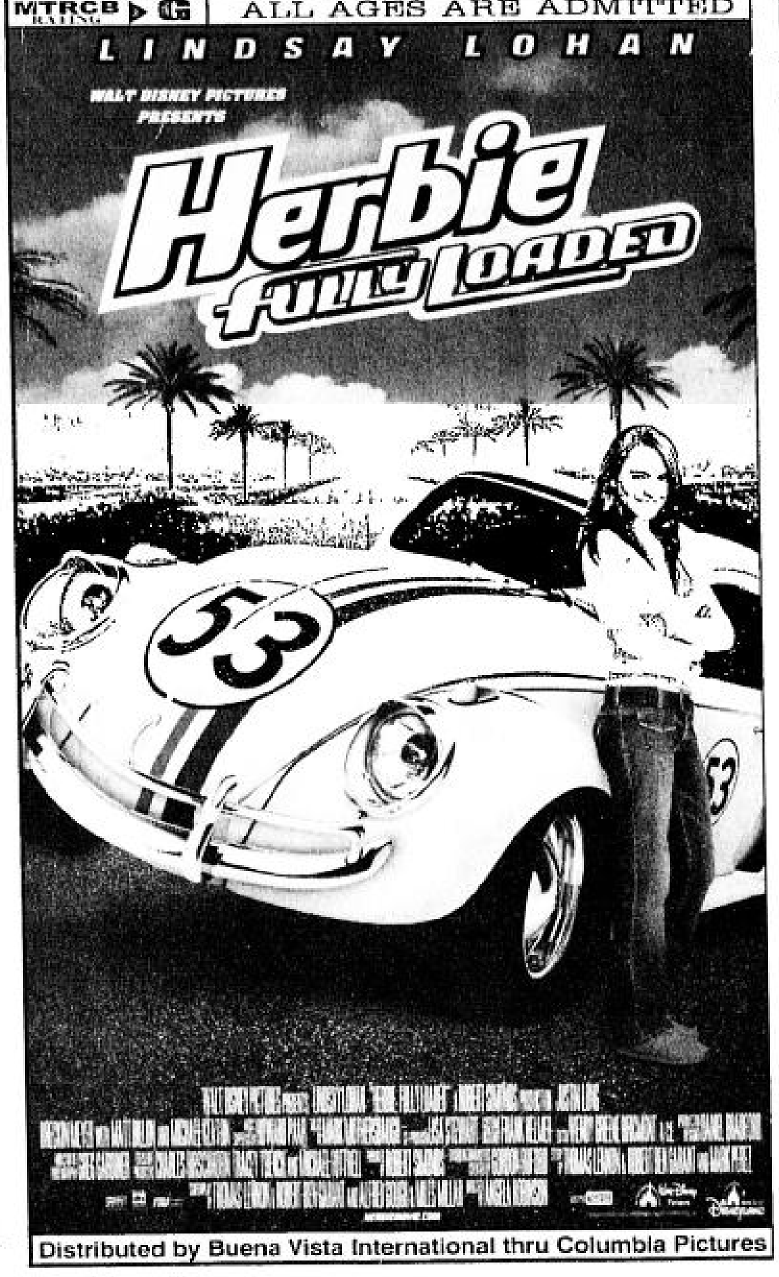
Pagulayan, who triumphed over Park Shin-young of Korea, 10-5, was scheduled to play against Vilmos Foldes of Hungary.

Host Chinese Taipei showed the way with 10 locals joining the final 32.

However, the Taiwenese delegation suffered big blows as pre-tournament favorite Yang Ching-shun and last year's runner-up Chang Pei-wei were shown the door by their respective opponents. Yang was conquered by Raj Hundal of England, 4-10, while Chang was beaten by countryman Chen.

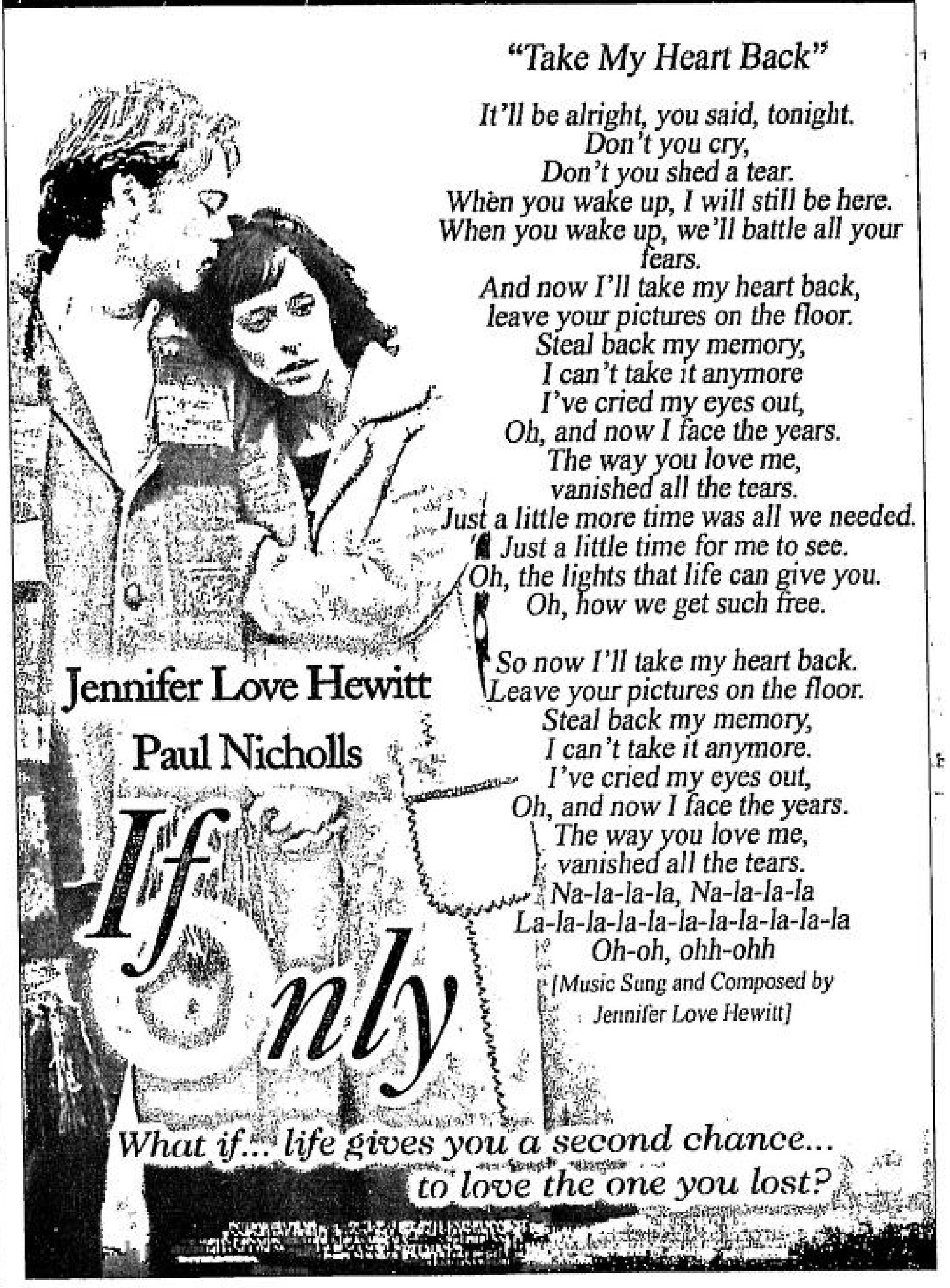
Former champion Earl Strickland and Johnny Archer of the US were also eliminated from the US$350,000 event. *Lorenzo Manguiat, contributor*

REV UP FOR A FAMILY ADVENTURE WITH HERBIE!
OPENS JULY 13!
MTRCB RATING ▶ G | ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED


LINDSAY LOHAN
WALT DISNEY PICTURES PRESENTS
Herbie Fully Loaded
53

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

OPENS JULY 13
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
GRAB YOUR HANKIES, GIVE YOURSELF A GOOD CRY

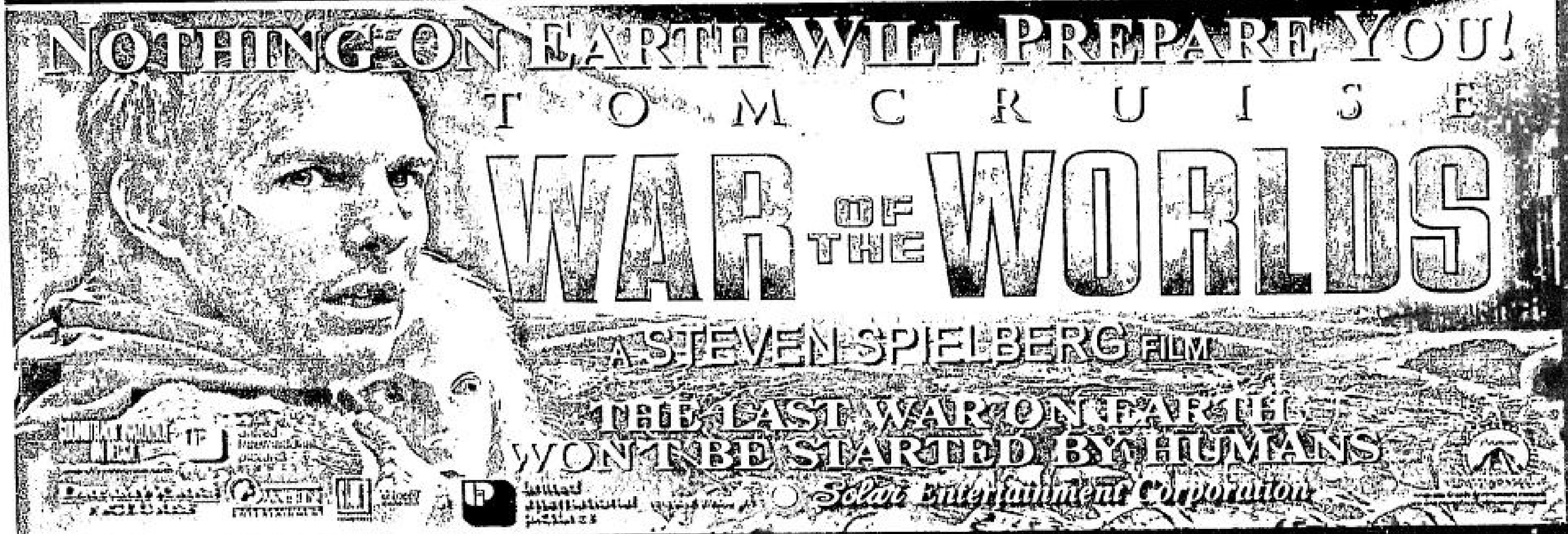

Jennifer Love Hewitt
Paul Nicholls
If Only
What if... life gives you a second chance... to love the one you lost?

"Take My Heart Back"

It'll be alright, you said, tonight.
Don't you cry,
Don't you shed a tear.
When you wake up, I will still be here.
When you wake up, we'll battle all your fears.
And now I'll take my heart back,
leave your pictures on the floor.
Steal back my memory,
I can't take it anymore
I've cried my eyes out,
Oh, and now I face the years.
The way you love me,
vanished all the tears.
Just a little more time was all we needed.
Just a little time for me to see.
Oh, the lights that life can give you.
Oh, how we get such free.

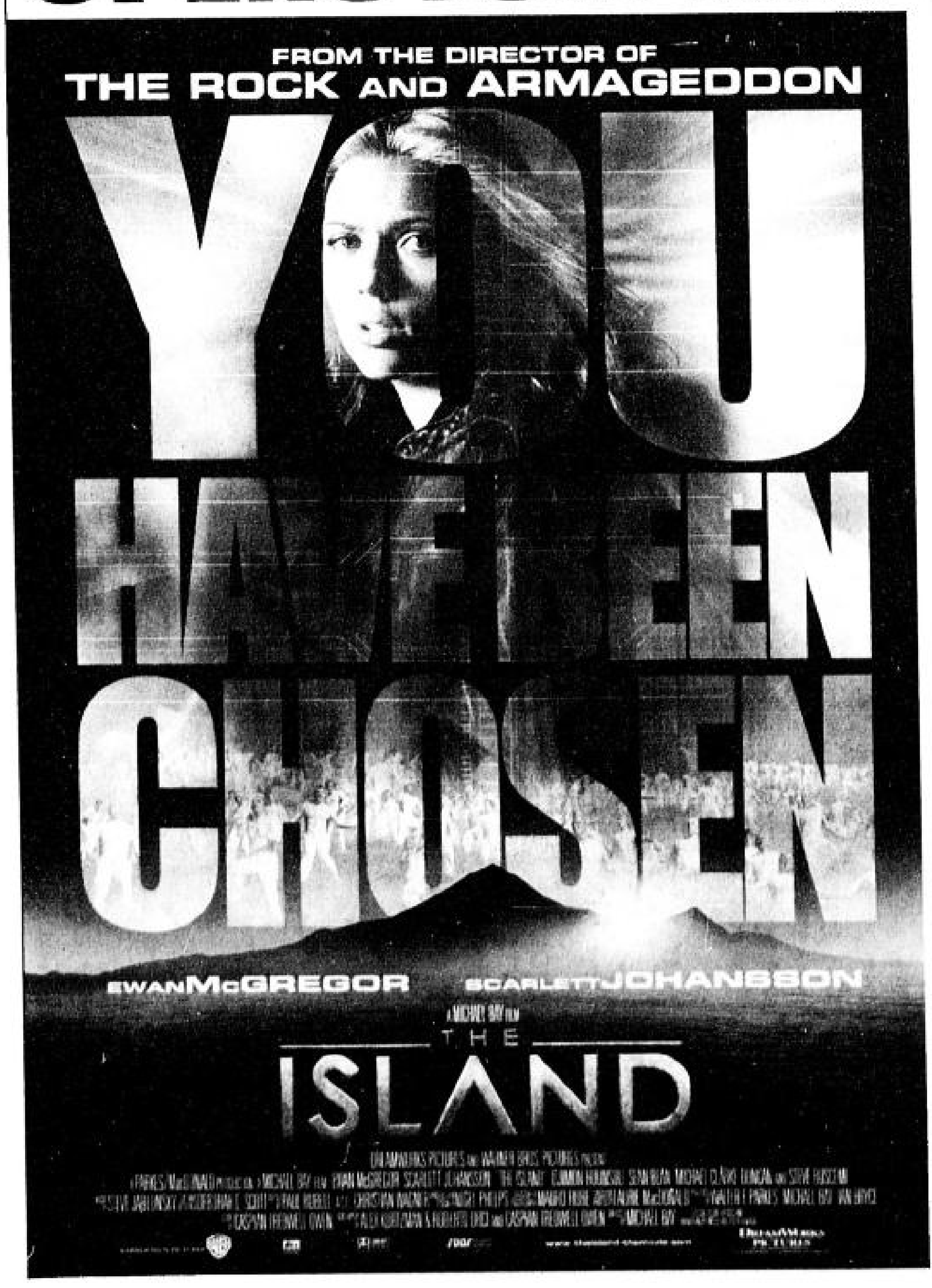
So now I'll take my heart back.
Leave your pictures on the floor.
Steal back my memory,
I can't take it anymore.
I've cried my eyes out,
Oh, and now I face the years.
The way you love me,
vanished all the tears.
Na-la-la-la, Na-la-la-la
La-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la
Oh-oh, ohh-ohh
[Music Sung and Composed by
Jennifer Love Hewitt]

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
PARENTAL GUIDANCE IS STRONGLY URGED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 7 YRS
2ND WEEK!


NOTHING ON EARTH WILL PREPARE YOU!
TOM CRUISE
WAR OF THE WORLDS
A STEVEN SPIELBERG FILM
THE LAST WAR ON EARTH WON'T BE STARTED BY HUMANS
Solar Entertainment Corporation

JOIN THE WAR!
WATCH STEVEN SPIELBERG'S BIGGEST FILM OPENING EVER IN THE PHILIPPINES!
CATCH TOM CRUISE'S HIGHEST-GROSSING PHILIPPINE MOVIE OF ALL TIME!

OPENS JULY 20!


FROM THE DIRECTOR OF
THE ROCK AND ARMAGEDDON
YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN
EWAN McGREGOR
SCARLETT JOHANSSON
A MICHAEL BAY FILM
THE ISLAND

MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED

PREPARE FOR THE FANTASTIC
4
FANTASTIC FOUR
MARVEL

NOW SHOWING!

Gadi, Dalisay gain junior b'minton final

ATENEO'S Toby Gadi attacks a lob shot by Kelvin Ang.

ATENEO'S Toby Gadi produced the worthiest win in the JVC Open Badminton Championships thus far, upending fancied Kelvin Tim Ang, 15-8, 17-15, yesterday and barging into the juniors finals at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati City.

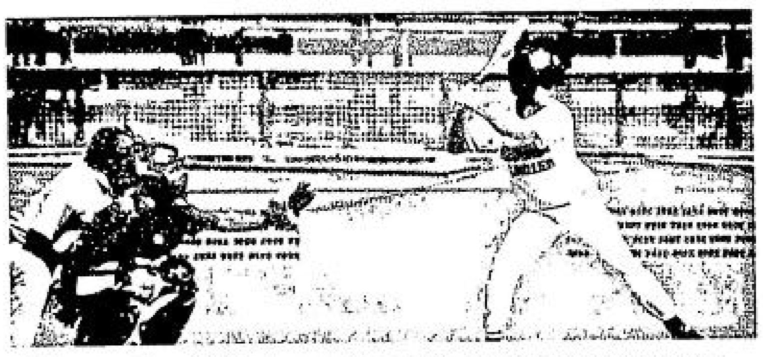
The 15-year-old Gadi, a mixed doubles specialist who has won the 2004 16-under and 2003 14-under titles, showed fine shotmaking and superb court coverage in making the championship round of the 16-years-and-under category which offers P7,000 to the winner.

"I'm very blessed and grateful to God that there is a JVC Open here where I can show my talent and skills in badminton," said Gadi, one of the Golden Shuttle Foundation's bets.

Ang, also 15 and one of the spearheads of Inflight/PNP/JLTC/PhilStar, had looked forward to a second finals appearance after gaining a championship berth in the elite division Wednesday.

Gadi will face PNP's Kevin Dalisay, who held off Andrei Babad of Battledore, 15-10, 15-10, in the finals.

Ateneo battles Arellano today in the finals of the boys' high school division. Poveda and Marcelo H. Del Pilar collide for the girls' crown.



AN International Little League Association of Manila selection will join the 2005 Asia Pacific Little League Regional championship.

Cebuana Lhuillier backs 3 Little League squads

CEBUANA-LHUILLIER gives big boost to Little League baseball in the country following its decision to support three youth baseball teams competing in Japan and Saipan this weekend.

The Majors team, composed of 11- to 12-year-old boys from different private schools in Metro Manila, will represent the country in the 2005 Asia-Pacific Little League regionals in Fukuoka, Japan, while two other Little League teams go to Saipan for the Pacific regional championship.

"We have been involved with youth sports programs for a long time in several events," said Cebuana-Lhuillier EVP GM Jean Henri Lhuillier, who is also the Asaphil Commissioner for slo-pitch softball. "In this case, our support for these three Little League teams is also a first step toward expanding the base of potential slo-pitch softball players both from regular softball and baseball."

Lhuillier's own slo-pitch softball team has already won four international titles in the last two years, including the Pangaea tournament in Bangkok and in Jakarta.

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3rd RAFFLE DRAW:

JACKETS

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Cabano San Lorenzo Guimaras

Rolando B Peralta
Honda Service Center, Tandag, Surigao Del Sur

Henry VU
A.T. Reyes St., Mand City

Anthony Lu Fernandez
Moramba Bankers Village, Dagupan City

Junel V. Pacalda
Sto Nio Magallanes, Agusan Del Norte

Anthony Monsalud
Pob North, Sta Cruz, Zambales

Ronnie C. Dacaro
Brgy. Trenchera Tayug Pang.

Melecio G. Gadong Jr.
San Nicolas, Candon City, Ilocos Sur

James Tagbo
Sobang, Sibonga, Cebu

Genalyn Damasco
General Santos City

Homer Cipriano
B-C Wawa, Taguig City

Mark Ismael Saludo
Laboon Maasin City

Ronald Carranceja
Gahonon Daet, Camarines Norte

Jose Lucero Mila
Brgy Consuegra, Bangar, La Union

Noel Villaruel
Poblacion San Dionisio, Iloilo

Efren Mara
National Road, North Poblacion, Sta Cruz, Zambales

Domnador Leal Jr.
030 Brgy Lacong Tagudin, Ilocos Sur

Joselito G Oliveros
Alarcon St., Antipolo City

Joven Cabrera
GK Lcod Australian Vil. Payatas, Q.C

Eduardo Mallari
Gen Luna St., Ampid, Smr

Romil Feleciano
E. Jacinto St., Baybay, Leyte

Corazon L Majico
San Roque St Brgy. Holy Spirit, Q.C

Efren Emberrenida
Igdalaqui, Sibalom, Antique

Romualdo C Losanez
Robin St Don Mariano Subd Cainta, Rizal

Maria Posadas
Calombayan, San Carlos City, Pangasinan

Raymundo De Guzman
Blk 9, Lot 12, Ph 3, St James Subd Batal Santiago City

Mark A. Gonzales
Brgy Paloka Valladolid Negros Occidental

Francisca Bernaldez
Rizal St Mabini, Pangasinan

Marvin S. Mingoa
Canlaon City, Negros Oriental

Marvin Yaquilla
B6 L6 Samantha Homes Lizada, Toril, Davao City

Arnold O. Abalayan
Lawaan Roxas City, Capiz

Bobby Padua
Salvacion Bula, Camarines Sur

Joselito Navarro
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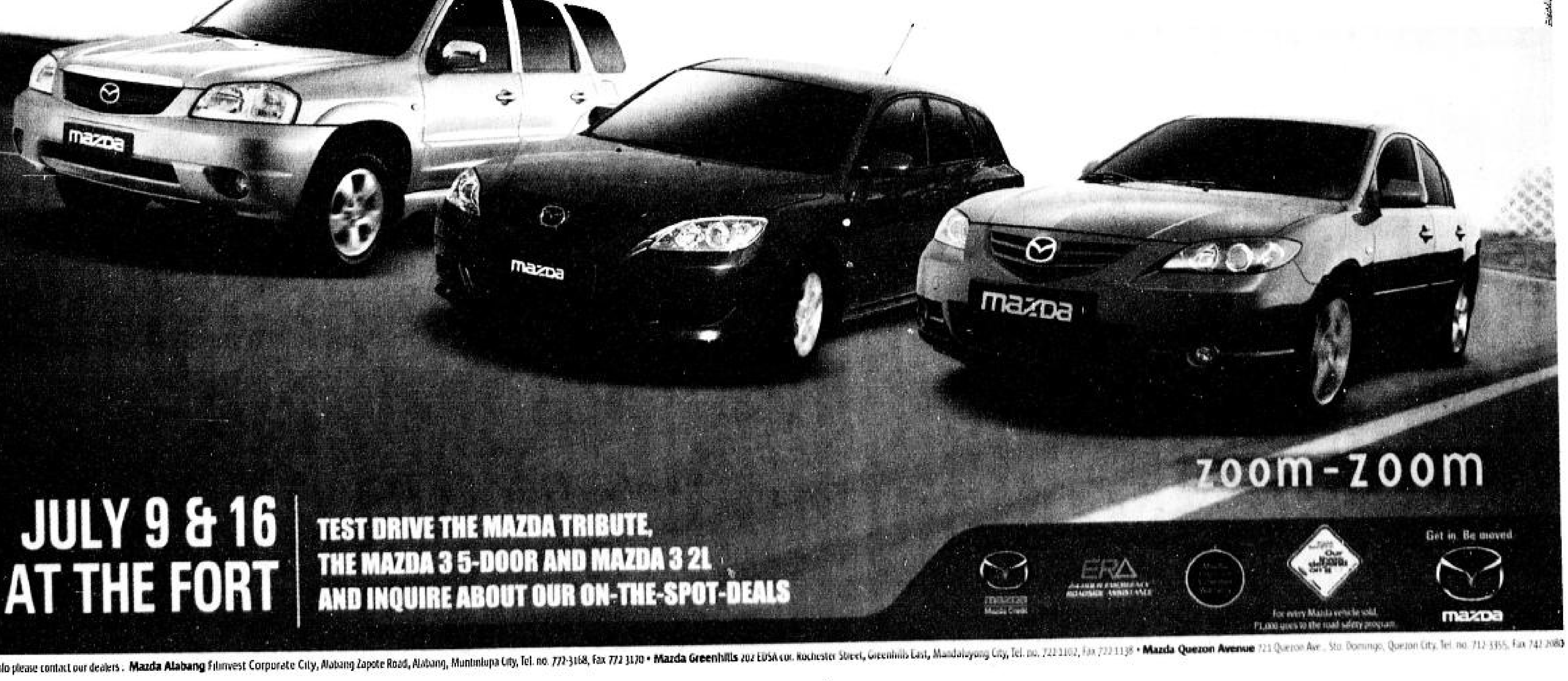

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Jose Llana is g-o-o-d in Broadway 'Spelling Bee'

AS CHIP Tolentino

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

NEW YORK—When you're in town, run, don't walk, to catch Jose Llana in the Tony Award-nominated musical, "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee."

The Filipino-American singer-actor is very good in this fun show about six pre-adolescent kids vying to become the local spelling bee champ. When I watched last week, a sell-out crowd loved the cast, including Jose as last year's spelling champ who has erections at the most inappropriate moments. You got that right. Jose's character, Chip Tolentino, has raging hormones that won't quit, even as he spells a difficult word such as t-i-t-t-u-p.

Jose, who appeared opposite Lea Salonga in "Flower Drum Song," even has a big song about erection. But it's done in a fun fashion so he might as well be singing a paean to elections instead. The actor swings from a rope onstage, hurls candies at the audience and at one point appears as... I will not spoil it for you.

SIGNING autographs after the show

New words

After the show, directed by Tony Award winner James Lapine, several instant fans of Jose waited outside Circle in the Square to seek his autograph, talk to him, take his picture or pose for snapshots with him. A smiling father, kids in tow, congratulated Jose and quipped that his young companions "learned new words tonight."

After signing the last autograph, Jose led me to a nearby bistro where we could talk. Wearing jeans and a baby blue Lacoste shirt, Jose seemed more confident and personable than the last time I interviewed him, during "Flower Drum Song's" initial LA run. Over drinks, he told me how he landed in this Broadway show written by William Finn and Rachel Sheinkin.

While he was in the Philippines from July to November last year (during which he recorded and released an all-Tagalog CD for Viva Records), he kept getting calls from his US agent. He turned down auditions until the opportunity to join "Spelling Bee" came along. He was hired while the show, conceived by Rebecca Feldman, was in rehearsals for the initial off-Broadway run.

"I replaced an actor," Jose revealed. "That's a director's prerogative. It was a real honor. They sent me the script while I was in the Philippines. I laughed my head off when I read it. I knew right away that I wanted to be part of the show. They were so open to changing my character's name."

The role, originally written for a Caucasian, became Filipino after Jose was cast. He is proud, understandably. "From now on, whenever they do the show, there's always going to be a Filipino character, Chip Tolentino," he said. "It's nice to be able to put your stamp on something."

Tribute to mom

Beaming now, he added, "The show's writer gave all of us in the cast the opportunity to christen our characters. It was a great gift. I chose Tolentino, my mother's maiden name. It was a good tribute to my mom."

When he left for the Philippines last year, he said, "I pretty much put my stage career here on hold. To come back so quickly and be in a show like this is great."

I complimented him about his big song. Jose said, "It's one of the reasons that they recast the part. The erection song is my moment."

Because of the show's subject and title, parents drag along their kids, not knowing that Jose, for example, will sing about "penis" and "erection." But the comic tone ensures that dads and moms don't have to cover their kids' ears or force them to flee the 678-seat theater.

"It's a show about kids for adults," Jose clarified. "But if the kids are too young to appreciate the jokes, it will go over their heads [anyway]."

The six principal actors—Jose, Dan Fogler (who won a Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in a Musical for his portrayal of a "nasally challenged" contestant who spells a word by first writing it on the floor with his shoe), Deborah S. Craig (an over-achieving Asian), Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Sarah Saltzberg and Celia Keenan-Bolger—tap 12-year-olds' awkward mannerisms to comic effect.

"We went to middle schools to observe kids," Jose said. "I watched movies that had kids in them. It's a great exercise. The body language of a 12-year-old is different. Children this age try to act like adults. They're very self-conscious."

The actor with the expressive large eyes rated himself as an "okay" speller in his school days. He competed in spelling bees but never won. I got a big laugh when I asked if, before doing "Spelling Bee," he had known how to spell the word "omphaloskepsis," one of the show's tough words.

According to the dictionary, omphaloskepsis is the contemplation of one's navel, and tittup is a lively prance. The show reminded me of words I misspelled as Calasiao's representative in a spelling bee, district level in Dagupan City. How could I mangle "hypocrite"? Can we go back in time? Can I buy a vowel? How about a consonant?

The cast, which won a Drama Desk award for Best Ensemble Performance, also includes Derrick Baskin as "comfort counselor" to losing contestants, Jay Reiss as the pronouncer who uses the words in the funniest unhelpful sentences, and Lisa Howard as a realtor/bee maven who annotates the proceedings with trivia a la sportscasters. Sample: "This contestant has a birthmark that looks like the map of the Philippines."

Adding an element of surprise and reality show-like touch to the show are four volunteers from the audience who complete the roster of contestants. "Sometimes the volunteers just don't work," Jose dissed. "One guy was very nervous. He went to the bar in the lobby and had five drinks. When he walked onstage, he was completely drunk. He was a mess. We had to figure out how to get him off the stage, quick. However, because of the volunteers, every show is different. Everything they do affects the show."

Reviews and rewards

Glowing reviews during the show's off-Broadway run enabled the successful move to Circle in the Square on Broadway, near 50th Street (ticket information is available at 212-239-6200, or www.telecharge.com). "We believed in the show. We were nicely rewarded when we went on Broadway," pointed out the actor who also appeared in such Broadway shows as "Rent" and "The King and I."

Having settled into the role, Jose plans to devote some free time to volunteer work, "a way of giving back." While starring in "The King and I," he volunteered at the pediatric center of a hospital's cancer unit. In the fall, Jose, who appeared in Will Smith's hit movie "Hitch" and filmed an indie film in Florida, plans to audition for roles in New York-based TV shows.

> He wore the *barong*, proudly, to the Tony Awards last May

"I INVENTED and christened my character. It feels good to put your stamp on something."

When I told Jose that he stood out in his white *barong* in a sea of black tuxes at last May's Tony Awards, where "Spelling Bee" was in the running with six nominations, he revealed: "One benefit of visiting the Philippines is that I became prouder to be Filipino. Every opportunity I have, I wear my *barong*. At the Tony... everyone asked what I was wearing? I was very proud to say it was the Filipino national shirt."

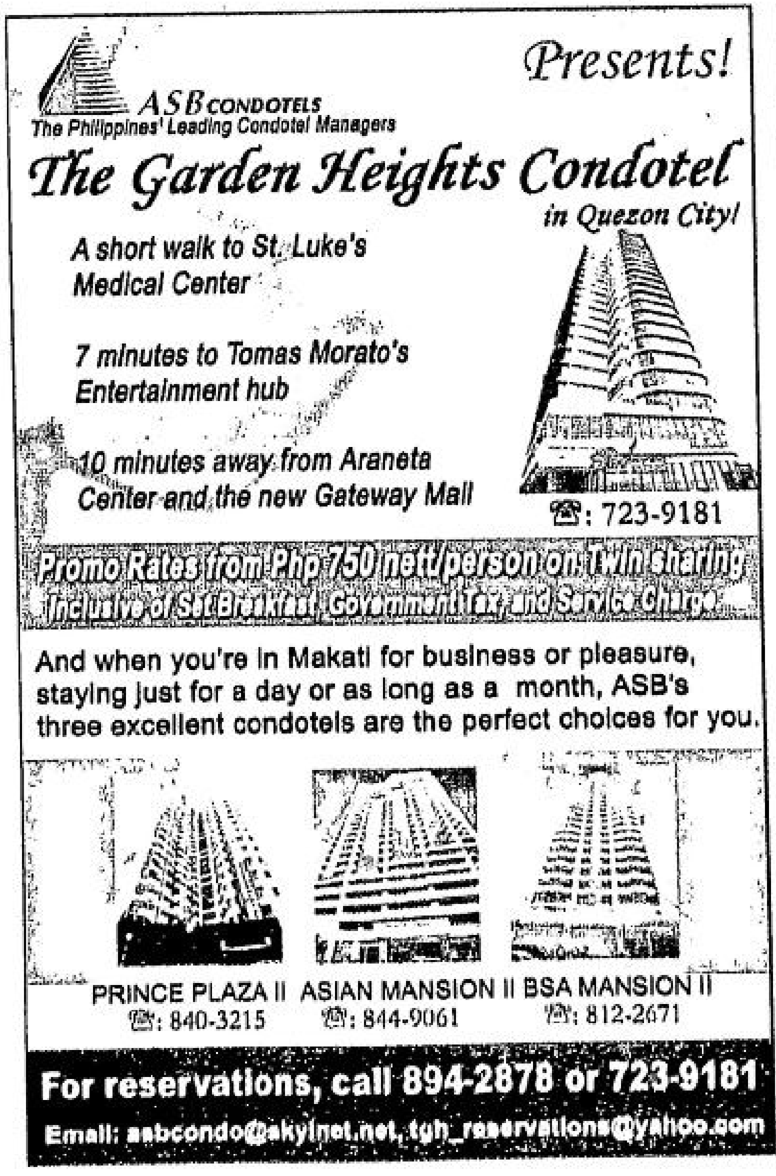
E-mail feedback on Johnny D interview

Amy Hope: "Excellent questions. It's rare to read interviews lately with new information on Johnny Depp. But you have several new-to-me facts."

Pam White: "When Mr. Depp was on Oprah's show a few months ago, she asked questions straight from a bio sheet. Yours were right on the money."

Sylvia Lee Lawley: You are one of the luckiest people alive to have talked to him. I'm a 50 year-old grandmother obsessed with Johnny Depp. I would have traded places with you in a second even if it had meant I'd die five minutes later. He is the best actor [and] also the most gorgeous person who ever lived.

(E-mail the columnist at rvnepales@yahoo.com.)



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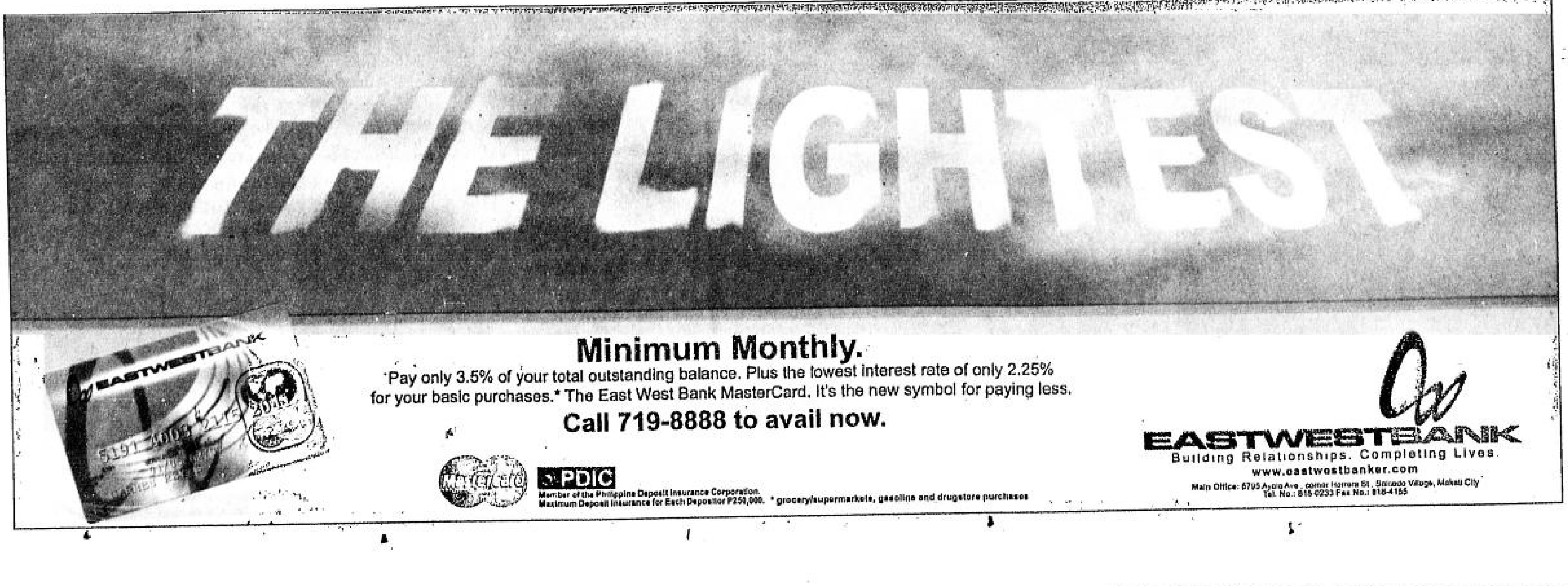

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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 WAR OF THE WORLDS	2 FANTASTIC 4	3 THX FANTASTIC 4 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BATMAN BEGINS	5 MONSTER-IN-LAW	6 FANTASTIC 4	7 FANTASTIC 4
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 WAR OF THE WORLDS 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00	2 FANTASTIC 4 11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX FANTASTIC 4 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX FANTASTIC 4 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	3 FANTASTIC 4 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 FANTASTIC 4 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 WAR OF THE WORLDS GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX FANTASTIC 4	2 WAR OF THE WORLDS	3 FANTASTIC 4	4 FANTASTIC 4	5 MONSTER-IN-LAW		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 FANTASTIC 4	2 WAR OF THE WORLDS	3 FANTASTIC 4	4 BATMAN BEGINS			

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PROMO MECHANICS:

a) Every one time purchase of four (4) FANTASTIC FOUR movie tickets in any Ayala Cinemas (Glorietta 4, Glorietta 1, Greenbelt 3, Greenbelt 1, Alabang Town Center and Market Market) entitles the four (4) moviegoers a chance to win prizes from the prize bowl instantly.
b) Prizes include: 300 Burger King Whopper Meal Coupons, 200 Timezone discount coupons and Fantastic Four Merchandise.
c) Prizes can be claimed at the designated Ayala Cinema ticket booth and/or Information Counter.
d) Prizes not claimed within 60 days shall be forfeited in favor of Ayala Cinemas with prior approval of DTI.
e) All employees of Ayala Cinemas and its subsidiaries including their relatives up to the second degree in consanguinity affinity are disqualified from joining the promo.
f) All prizes are not convertible to cash but are transferable.

Per DTI NCR Permit No. 3951Series of 2005

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Promising film treats on HBO

WATCH out for these promising films this month on the HBO movie channel:

"ABOUT SCHMIDT," starring **Jack Nicholson** and **Kathy Bates**. When Warren Schmidt (Nicholson) discovers that his wife Helen has been receiving love letters from his best friend, he does his best to keep his daughter Jeannie from making the same "mistake" of getting married.

"CATCH ME IF YOU CAN." **Steven Spielberg** directs this movie, which casts **Leonardo DiCaprio** as a young con man who makes people believe that he's a doctor, lawyer and airline co-pilot. **Tom Hanks** plays his nemesis from the FBI.

"CHARLOTTE GRAY." **Cate Blanchett** plays a woman who receives news that her boyfriend has been reported missing in action. She volunteers to work with British intelligence and is smuggled into France, where she works with French resistance forces, disguised as a woman from Paris.

"COMING TO AMERICA." In this hit comedy by **John Landis**, **Eddie Murphy** plays an African prince who goes to New York to look for a woman to love and wed. However, his father has other ideas.

"DEAD CALM." A young couple on the high seas rescue the sole survivor on another vessel, who eventually turns against them, forcing them to fight for their lives. With **Nicole Kidman**, **Sam Neill** and **Billy Zane**.

"DOC HOLLYWOOD." A cool comer in the medical world (**Michael J. Fox**) is headed for a big-bucks job in LA, but gets sidetracked in a small town. He can't wait to get out of the hick town—until he meets an ambulance driver (Julie Warner). Suddenly small-town life doesn't look so bad! **Woody Harrelson** also stars.

"LEGENDS OF THE FALL." In this sweeping saga of love and betrayal, three brothers share an unbreakable bond—until a beautiful woman enters their lives. This epic romance follows their father, a retired Army general, as he tries to come to terms with himself, his sons, and the impending disaster that threatens to tear them apart.

"LOST IN TRANSLATION." In **Sofia Coppola**'s quirky and touching film, the frenetic city of Tokyo becomes the stage for the most unlikely friendship between an aging actor and a newly married woman. With **Bill Murray** and **Scarlett Johansson**.

"MISS LETTIE AND ME." **Mary Tyler Moore** plays an old maid who's become bitter—until her young grand-niece comes to visit. She tries to warm her grand-aunt's heart and help her break out of her self-imposed isolation.

"MY HOUSE IN UMBRIA." An English novelist (**Maggie Smith**) is one of only four survivors of a mysterious train explosion on a trip to Milan. She offers her home in Umbria to her fellow survivors, and they form an unexpected bond—until some unsettling possibilities crop up regarding the explosion's origin. This Emmy Award-winning movie is directed by **Richard Loncraine**.

"NEIL SIMON'S THE GOODBYE GIRL." **Jeff Daniels** and **Patricia Heaton** star in this remake of the Academy Award-winning 1977 film topbilling **Richard Dreyfuss** and **Marcia Mason**. The two leads share an apartment and are consistently at each other's throats until her little daughter becomes a bridge between them—and they fall in love.

"NORMAL." **Jessica Lange** and **Tom Wilkinson** star in this offbeat, powerful film about a couple whose love defies convention: After 25 years of marriage, he tells his wife that he wants a sex change—but they remain married.

"ONE TRUE THING." **Renee Zellweger**'s character discovers that her parents (**Meryl Streep** and **William Hurt**) have kept dark secrets from her that she must now face as an adult.

PT Usha on 'Crossings'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE 11TH episode of "Crossings" on Discovery Channel (July 24 at 7 p.m.) tells the story of how a young girl from a small village in India rose against the odds and a strict matriarch community to chase her dream of clinching an Olympic medal for her country.

The legend of Indian sprinter PT Usha was born at the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow. At the age of 16, PT became India's youngest athlete to take part in the Games. While she didn't win any medals in Moscow, it marked the beginning of her 20-year reign as the queen of Asian track and field.

Usha missed a bronze medal at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, but this did not slow her down. Her winning spree continued in the Asian athletic arena, where she smashed record after record.

She retired from competitive running in 1999, but her dream of Olympic honors for Indian sprinters remains alive in the sports school that she set up in 2002, to recruit and train potential sports champions. She strongly believes that the elusive Olympic gold medal is within India's grasp.

FONO Awards

GEE Entertainment Int'l recently launched the FONO Awards. The Awards aims to give recognition by honoring individuals and groups that have excelled in different areas of the music industry. The FONO trophy was designed by National Artist **Napoleon Abueva**.

The general public can also nominate their favorite music artists for the People's Choice Awards. And there will be special awards for the recording industry, TV music, live entertainment, music video and radio. Call 637-3850.

Tanghalang Ateneo

THE NEW season of Tanghalang Ateneo kicks off this September with **Bienvenido Noriega's** "Bayan-bayanan," a play about a group of Filipino immigrants in Europe, the precursors of today's overseas contract workers. The production is designed by National Artist **Salvador Bernal**, and directed by **Ronan Capinding**.

In November, Tanghalang Ateneo's new recruits present "Nasaan si Kaliwete?" an adaptation of "Waiting for Lefty." In this version, members of a union of jeepney drivers meet to act on the possibility of staging a strike. Translation by **Gerry de Asis** and direction by **Ryan Villena**.

And January 2006 sees the staging of **John Steinbeck**'s "Of Mice and Men." Two friends run away from the law and work as migrant farmers. Despite their difficult situation, they find solace in their dream to own a farm. However, that dream is threatened when one of them is accused of murder. **Ronan Capinding** directs. Call 426-6001, loc. 5056.

NATIONAL Artist Napoleon Abueva designed trophy for FONO Awards

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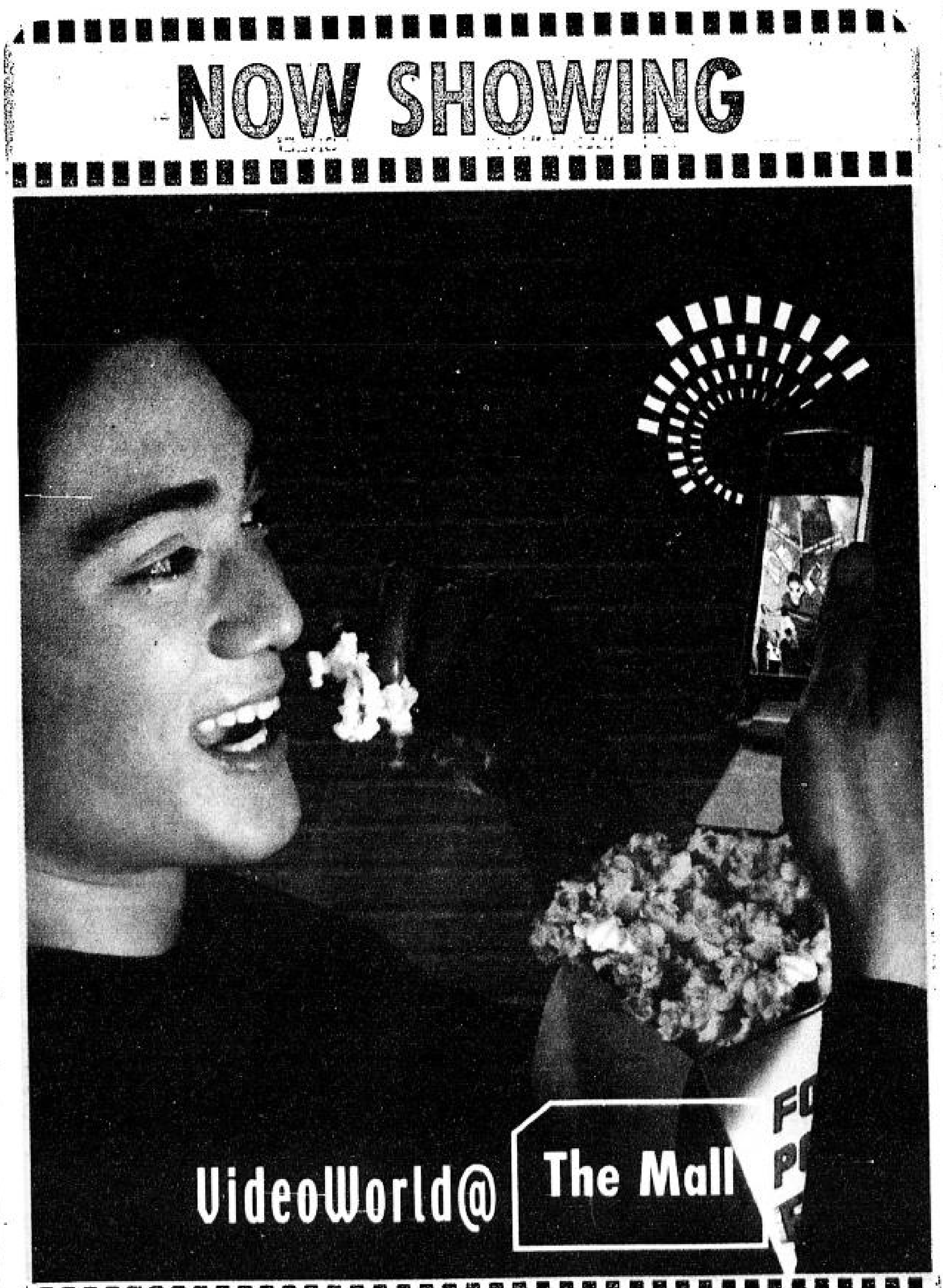

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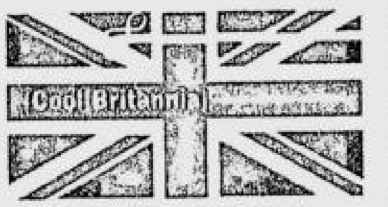
FACULTY AND STUDE

UNIVERSITY OF RIZAL CAMPUS TOUR AT LAS PALMAS HOTEL

The University of Rizal - Morong Campus recently had a hotel exposure at Las Palmas Hotel. The aim of this activity was to familiarize the HRM students with the standards and operations of the hotel. Shown in the photo are the University of Rizal students with (from far left, standing) Danilo Molina - Las Palmas Hotel resident manager, (from far right, sitting) Sharon Medianero - Las Palmas Hotel senior account manager and faculty of the University of Rizal Claudine Dematera, Elsa D. Ramos and Juliet Gonzales.

'Cool Britannia' at Bocarinos



THE NEW WORLD Renaissance Hotel's stylish resto Bocarinos presents "Cool Britannia", celebrating traditional and modern touches of food from the British Isles, on June 27 to July 8. "Cool Britannia" offers a selection of well-loved dishes from the north of Scotland to the Gulf Stream of the Channel Islands showcasing British cooking today.

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"Cool Britannia" is featured in the "Perfect Bite" Menu offered for lunch and dinner at Bocarinos at P765+ per person. Bocarinos is open Mondays to Fridays, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 to 10 p.m.; Saturdays at 6 to 10 p.m. At the same time, selected dishes highlights the lunch and dinner buffet at the Coffee Shop at P865+ per person. The Coffee Shop is open daily from 6 a.m. to 12 midnight.

For more information and reservations, call the New World Renaissance Hotel at 811-6888.

Somerset Serviced Residences Manila at the SME Trade Fair

SOMERSET Serviced Residences in Manila participated in the two-day SME Trade Fair 2005 where multinational companies showcased their products and services to Manila's public.

The trade fair was organized by The American Chamber of Commerce, Australia-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce, British Chamber of Commerce, Canadian Chamber of Commerce and The European Chamber of Commerce.

Somerset's exhibition booth was set up to closely replicate the contemporary and elegant living room of a typical Somerset property. Its management and staff were also around to welcome visitors to its booth and address any queries they may have.

Through this, visitors had the opportunity to experience the international standard of The Ascott Group's serviced residences as well as the excellent service delivered by its staff.

For enquiries and reservations for Somerset Serviced Residences, Manila, please contact the Central Sales Office at telephone (63-2) 888 0531 or (63-2) 888 0537 or E-mail at enquiry.manila@the-ascott.com.

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DENR HELDS FORUM AT THE EXECUTIVE PLAZA HOTEL

The Department of Environmental and Natural Resources recently had a three day Land Management Sector Forum at the Aguinaldo Ballroom of The Executive Plaza Hotel. The distinguished guest speaker for the said event was Hon. Manuel D. Gerochi - Undersecretary for Lands (third from left in the photo). Other officers present in the meeting were (from left) Director Edna Tabadora - Anda - National Coordinator DENR CARP - NCO, Diony A. Ventura, MNSA - Undersecretary Namfria, lawyer Analiza Rebuelta - Teh - Assistant Secretary for Foreign Assisted Projects and LAMP Executive Director and lawyer Allan V. Barcena - OIC Director Lands Management Bureau.

SHOWN at the exhibit are (from left) Joanne Gomez (director of sales, Somerset Serviced Residences, Manila), Tony Ho (resident manager, Somerset Salcedo), Stuart Hall (president, Canadian Chamber of Commerce), Arthur Gindap (area general manager, Somerset Serviced Residences, Manila); (front) Grace Ventosa (Canadian Chamber of Commerce), Lew Yen Ping (resident manager, Somerset Olympia Makati).

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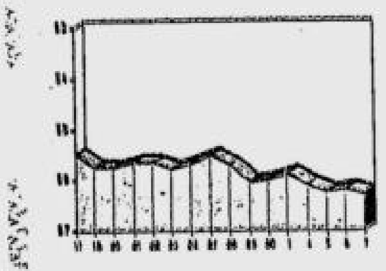

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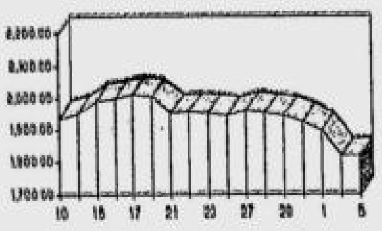
STOCK MARKET

Shares rise 1.89% on bargain hunting

SHARE prices yesterday closed 1.89 percent higher as the market snapped back on bargain-hunting after hitting six-month lows on Wednesday amid concerns over the fu

SHARES/ B4

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



Another pre-need firm files for rehabilitation

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PLATINUM Plans Philippines Inc. early this week sought refuge from a regional trial court to undergo rehabilitation and suspend payment of its tuition obligations.

Branch 61 of the Makati Regional Trial Court yesterday allowed the troubled pre-need firm to temporarily stop payments to its plan holders and creditors.

Platinum Plans has over 37,000 plan holders under its care. The pre-need firm is the second pre-need firm to seek a court's protection this year.

The Salas family, headed by former banker Ernesto Salas, owns the majority stake in Platinum. Its license to sell fixed value and open-ended education plans was suspended this year when the company ran into liquidity problems.

Platinum has a trust fund deficit of more than P100 million.

In its petition, Platinum asked the court to suspend all claims that would be filed against the pre-need firm and its guarantors. It said it could only

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The exteriors of the homes at Courtyards of Portofino are in bright sun-drenched colors using various textures similar to courtyard homes in Italy.

Imagine being with a loved one under the canopy of a clear, starry moonlit night. The evening is cool. The air is crisp. The wind blows softly, gently. It is idyllic, romantic...right out of the pages of a novel.

Brittany's Courtyards of Portofino:
A Romantic Interlude

Now think about enjoying this moment, the romance of the outdoors, right inside your home.

This is the experience enjoyed at Courtyards of Portofino. A courtyard inside the homes provides a private, romantic nook from which to enjoy a cool starry night or a warm sunny day.

The courtyard: in tune with classic Italian design

The philosopher Socrates describes the courtyard with a lyrical quality, calling it a section of the home that is in harmony with the sun and moon and the entire home.

An Italian architectural masterwork, the courtyard can be likened to a musical masterpiece: the romantic interlude that bridges the main composition that is your home.

Presently four courtyard homes are available: Rembrandt (260 sq. m. floor area), Raphael (249 sq. m. floor area), Cézanne (193 sq. m. floor area) and Monet (233 sq. m. floor area).

A masterpiece of Italian architecture

The homes at Courtyards of Portofino take design cues from Italy's courtyard homes.

Colors are sun-drenched. Bright yellows. Subdued reds. Light woods. Stone cladding adds texture and contrast. Archways and cupolas are distinctively old world Italy.

The master craftsmen

A team of the country's top craftsmen in property development worked together with Brittany to create the quaint magnificence of the Courtyards of Portofino.

The interiors were meticulously researched and crafted by Cynthia and Ivy Almario of Atelier Almario, so the homes are built for comfort, space and Italian style.

The architecture, designed in collaboration with Recio + Casas, is created with an eye towards emulating the magnificence of homes in Italy.

The landscaping, flourishing with greenery and accented by ornate Italian fountains, benches and charming cobblestone paths, is by Benny Velasco of FN Velasco and Jojo Lazaro of Ground Works.

From design to execution, Brittany maintains a guiding hand and a keen eye as it realizes its vision for a unique lifescape with the concept of courtyards within a courtyard.

Put together, the verdant landscape, the classic courtyard homes, and the elegant interiors create a scenic setting, where nature and man-made homes become an Italian orchestration punctuated by the romantic interlude of the courtyard.

Inside, the courtyard homes are designed with elegant Italian architectural details, including large windows, light-colored walls, wood floors and rounded corners.

The courtyard: a private, romantic nook, a high note in the home's design.

Socrates describes the courtyard with a lyrical quality, calling it a section of the home that is in harmony with the sun and moon and the entire home

Feel the romance of the Courtyards of Portofino. Get a Property Preview. Call 850 2868 or 850 6986. Click www.brittany.com.ph.

Rembrandt, the largest of the model homes, features a distinctively Italian cupola and arches.

RP still on right fiscal track, says Bear, Stearns

By Michelle V. Remo

THE CONCERN that the Philippines is on the verge of a fiscal crisis, following the suspension of the expanded value-added tax law, may prove to be an exaggeration, according to United States investment bank Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.

The US investment bank insisted that with or without the e-VAT law, the Philippines is still on track and on its way to fiscal recovery.

"The important thing to keep in mind is that the fiscal situation in the Philippines is improving, although at a slower pace without the VAT law," the bank said in its latest analysis on the Philippine economy. "In our view, the Philippines is not getting worse."

In substantiating its claim, Bear, Stearns cited the announcement of National Treasurer Omar Cruz that the national government would likely post another one-month budget surplus in June.

The government recorded a one-month surplus in April—the first time in four years.

The Department of Finance next week will report the national government's budget position for June and for the first half of the year.

The bank, quoting the country's treasurer, said the Philippine government likely posted a budget deficit in the first half that was P30 billion lower than its target. This means that should the government meet its target for the second half, its budget deficit for the whole year might only reach P150 billion, or P30 billion lower than the full-year target.

The 2005 budget deficit target was set at P180 billion for the full year, and P98.5 billion for the first half.

But Bear, Stearns said that with the e-VAT law, the Philippine government would be able to accelerate the attainment of its medium-term goal of wiping out its budget deficit.

The e-VAT law was estimated to generate as much as P31 billion in incremental revenue in the second half of the year, and P105 billion annually starting next year.

The e-VAT law, considered to be the Arroyo administration's key measure to resolve the fiscal problem, is supposed to expand the coverage of the tax to include oil and electricity, among others. The law will also give the President a standby authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent next year.

The US bank said that the temporary restraining order issued on the VAT would even benefit embattled President Macapagal-Arroyo because it would prevent inflation from rising further.

Critics of the administration were blaming the government's tax reform measures for the recent increase in consumer prices.

"Full implementation of the VAT law on July 1 would likely have pushed the inflation rate back above 8 percent, and maybe even 9 or 10 percent," the bank said. "This would have been very bad for President Arroyo—from a political point of view—at this time."

Bear, Stearns, however, said there are risks that would follow the Supreme Court's suspension of the VAT law. For one, there is the danger that the suspension of the e-VAT law may not be lifted, and that the law may be declared null and void.

Another pre-need firm files for rehabilitation

From page B1

settle up to P75 million of its maturing obligations to plan holders.

It has also asked the court to appoint a rehabilitation receiver.

As part of its rehabilitation plan, Platinum said it would not sell, transfer or dispose in any way any of its properties except as requested or incurred in the course of its business.

Platinum said that, despite the meltdown in the pre-need industry, it firmly believes it should be allowed to undergo rehabilitation and implement a recovery plan to protect the interests of its stakeholders, creditors and plan holders.

It added that the "realizable value of its existing assets can provide a mode of settling all claims of its plan holders which are not yet due at the moment."

It proposed a rehabilitation plan that would run for eight years.

In a statement, Platinum acknowledges that the filing of its petition to suspend payment to its plan holders and creditors would have a grave impact specially on those whose plans were approaching maturity.

Platinum hopes that the court will allow it to sell its assets so that it can raise enough funds to settle maturing plans.

Platinum began selling education plans in 1983. At that time, it was known as the Children's Investment for Lifetime Development Corp.

In 1990, the firm changed its name to Platinum Plans. It stopped selling traditional open-ended education plans in 1993, and shifted to fixed value education plans.

From the time it was organized, Platinum said its revenues had been on the upswing. Revenues soared to P553 million in 2003 from P28 million in 1989. At about this time, it expanded its distribution network to 132 branches.

In 1999, several senior officers were found to have initiated fraudulent deals by making it appear that the plans were fully paid when they were not. The delinquent officers were dismissed.

Platinum said that in 2004, revenues plunged to P363 million as confidence in the industry was affected by the financial problems of pre-need giants like College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc.

Platinum said that while it has more than sufficient assets to cover for all its liabilities, it may not be able to pay for plans as they mature.

Like other pre-need firms that sold open-ended plans, Platinum was adversely affected by spiraling tuition rates.

In April, Pacific Plans Inc. of the Yuchengco family filed for rehabilitation with a Makati court. PPI said that it would not be able to pay future claims because school fees had been increasing at a tremendous rate ever since the government removed the 10-percent cap on tuition hikes in 1990.

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SCHOOLTEACHERS take lessons seriously from a Convergys trainor

Call center talks people into speaking English

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

CORPORATE CITIZEN

CONVERGYS Corp., the world's largest call center firm operating out of the United States, is looking to the Philippines for the continued growth of its business.

Convergys has six contact centers in Metro Manila and one in Cebu, employing 5,600 Filipinos.

And it's just getting started.

The call center operator, however, is finding it increasingly difficult to hire Filipinos proficient enough in English communication to meet its global standards.

Industry figures show that only four out of 100 who apply for a job in a call center pass the oral communication exams. This belies the Filipinos' reputation for being natural English speakers.

Convergys, thus, realized that if it does not do anything to reverse the trend, it will not be able to meet the global demand for call center agents. And it will miss the rare opportunity to provide employment to thousands of Filipinos.

Bright spot

The call center industry is one of the few bright spots in the troubled economy.

The Philippines ended 2004 with 70 contact centers, from just 20 in 2002. Total investment was pegged at $116 million for last year alone.

The industry aims to employ 96,000 by the end of the year and up to 300,000 by 2009. Call center seats are just there for the taking.

"The biggest challenge we face is ensuring a pool of competent graduates who can meet global standards," said Marife Zamora, country general manager of Convergys Philippines, in a presentation during the recently concluded Corporate Social Responsibility Expo 2005.

To face the challenge, Convergys embarked on an Oral Communication Skills Training for Secondary Public School Teachers in June last year.

Convergys believes that to preserve that pool of talent so vital to its operations, efforts to improve English proficiency must start with the teachers tasked to hone the English skills of their students.

"We know that the quality of our graduates depends more than anything on the quality of teachers that mold them in their early years of development," she said. "Training teachers would create a ripple effect and bring about the greatest impact."

Convergys, thus, teamed up with the Department of Education to start the training program, particularly the DepEd's Mentorship Program.

Mentor teachers

DepEd provided the network of mentor-teachers, while Convergys provided the training module on the art of English communication.

Training for mentor teachers in Luzon started in June 24 and was held at the Convergys training facility in Makati. Training for Visayas and Mindanao, on the other hand, was held at Convergys Cebu.

Over 330 participated in the program.

The participants were provided the same facilities, equipment and software that Convergys' call center representatives use during the communication and culture training.

They got their training for free and were provided with training materials they can use with their students and fellow-teachers when they go back to school.

Zamora said the facilitators were top quality Convergys trainers who volunteered to give up their weekends to conduct the teacher training for free.

These facilitators bring with them their experience in training over 5,000 technical and customer care representatives in providing service to American customers, and this was shared with the mentor-teachers.

Teachers learned about accent neutralization, intonation, pronunciation, practical grammar, assertiveness and thought organization.

Series of firsts

"For many of the mentor teachers, the training was a series of firsts," Zamora said. "For some, it was their first encounter with training in an electronic environment. Others heard their own speech for the first time, and realized the need to practice fluency in English communication."

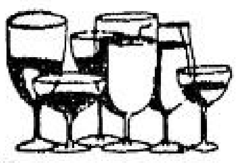
Convergys is hopeful that with more teachers undergoing the training, it can contribute to the improvement of English proficiency among the young.

Convergys followed up the successful partnership with DepEd with similar arrangements with the Sa Aklat Sisikat Foundation and the Philippine Business for Social Progress, which share similar development goals.

"In the end, while we recognize that this undertaking will contribute to the continued success of our industry, we also seized it as an opportunity to actualize the Convergys core values of integrity, teamwork and corporate citizenship," Zamora said.

Junior taipans show GMA clout

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

PRESIDENT Arroyo found herself in celestial kingdom Tuesday night, dining with sons and daughters of taipans who kept their pro-Ping, pro-Erap, pro-FPJ sentiments in check to pay their respects to the country's beleaguered Chief Executive.

The occasion was the induction of the officers of the Anvil Club, the junior version of the Binondo-based Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, led by textile scion George Siy and columnist Wilson Lee Flores, GMA's student in Ateneo.

Despite the short notice, the Anvil Club was able to round up a respectable number of guests, including Singapore Ambassador Lim Kheng Hua, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, Reps. Jesli Lapus and Miles Roces, Presidential Adviser Joey Concepcion (a La Sallite who was squirming in his seat over the anti-GMA La Salle ads), Ambassador Joey Antonio and Harvard-bound IBP president Joel Cadiz.

The President herself hardly gave any hint of personal turmoil as she worked the audience, shaking hands and exchanging pleasantries. Dinner itself was mercifully quick and devoid of speeches and cultural shows.

The President arrived at 7 p.m., and by 8 p.m. she was gone. According to after-dinner accounts, economics, not the political circus, dominated the presidential table talk.

Despite the President having left, the Anvil Club lingered on for another hour, prompting insurance tycoon Peter Coyiuto, who first stepped inside the Palace during the tumultuous '80s, to remark how relaxed the atmosphere was, compared to the Marcos years.

We will stop here, before we stray into politics, hand wringing and self-flagellation.

Lies, damned lies and EPCIB statistics

EQUITABLE PCIBank said the Monetary Board was wrong to order its investment bank subsidiary to reflect the current market pricing of its shareholdings, representing 10 percent of Equitable PCIBank shares, despite losing half their value since their 1999 acquisition.

The bank also disputed the new Monetary Bank order to sell the 10-percent block, which

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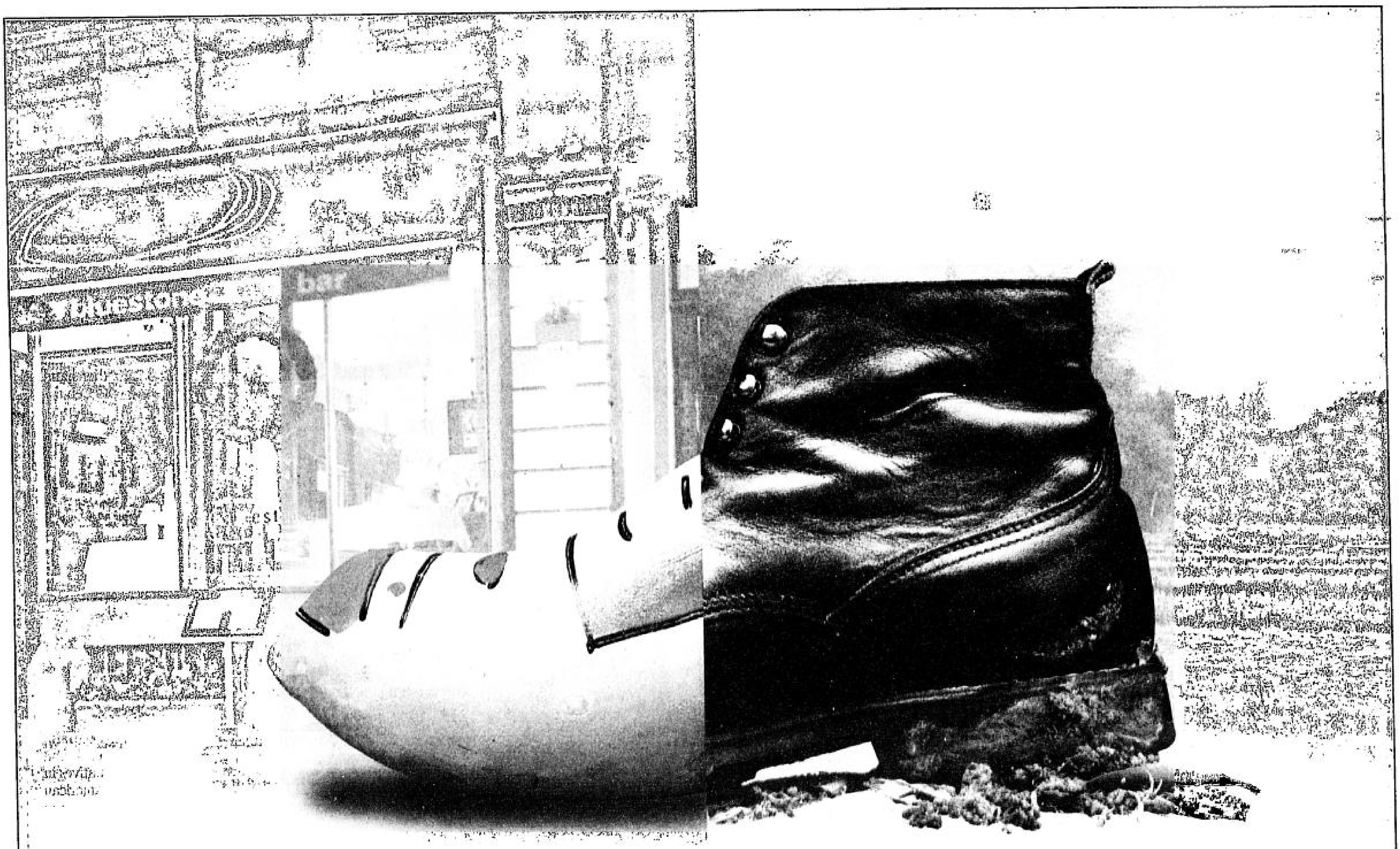

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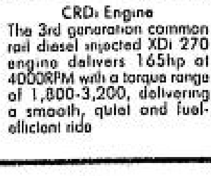
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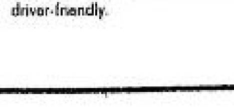
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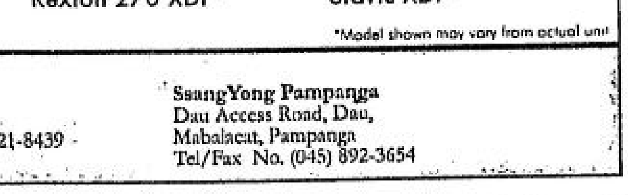
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PESO NEARS ALL-TIME LOW

Bank reserve requirement raised

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY Board yesterday approved a 2 percentage-point hike in the reserve requirement on banks to 21 percent effective Friday next week to siphon off excess liquidity that put pressure on inflation and foreign exchange rates.

This developed as the peso tumbled anew, nearing historic lows, against the US dollar on rumors that key economic managers were quitting the Macapagal-Arroyo administration. The peso weakened to an intraday low of 56.39 to $1 before closing at 56.28 or 10 centavos lower than the 56.18 finish on Wednesday.

"The idea is to mop up excess liquidity in the system which can be inflationary. Portion of this excess liquidity found its way to the foreign exchange market resulting in the weakening of the peso," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a press briefing after yesterday's Monetary Board meeting.

"A currency depreciation also tends to be inflationary. This increase will help check inflationary pressures," he said, noting that the 2-percentage point hike in reserves would siphon off P26 billion from the financial system.

The percentage of regular or statutory reserves, or the portion of deposit and deposit substitutes kept with the BSP, would be raised from 9 to 10 percent while the liquidity reserves would be raised from 10 to 11 percent.

The regular reserves refer to funds kept with the BSP, a quarter of which the BSP pays the banks a 4-percent interest rate.

Liquidity reserves refer to the portion of funds required to be placed in market-yielding instruments.

"Of course, this will be reviewed on a continuing basis and we'll see if there are any adjustments that will be taken," Tetangco said.

He said the BSP's long-term thrust remained the reduction of the reserves in order to lower intermediation costs.

The latest increases in the reserve requirement will raise the banks' financial intermediation cost by 0.09 percentage points, BSP Assistant Governor Diwa Guinigundo estimated.

The MB last hiked the reserve requirement on peso deposits and deposit substitutes of banks and quasi-banks by two percentage points to 19 percent in February last year, as a preemptive response to threats arising from the sharp peso depreciation then.

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CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

- Outstanding Filipino Franchise of the Year -
(one winner each in food, retail, service & kiosks)
• Must be homegrown in concept and originally incorporated in the Philippines.
• Minimum of five (5) years in franchise operations.

- International Master Franchise of the Year -
(one winner each in food, retail, service & kiosks)
• Minimum of five (5) years in franchise operations in the Philippines
• The master franchisor must also have five (5) years franchise operations from the country of origin.
• The company must have a stable, credible & excellent reputation both here & abroad

- Most Promising Filipino Franchise of the Year -
(one winner each in food, retail, service & kiosks)
• Must be homegrown in concept and originally incorporated in the Philippines.
• Minimum of three (3) years in existence and two (2) successful years in franchise operations.

- Franchise Marketing Campaign of the Year -
(one winner each in food, retail, service & kiosks)
• Minimum of three (3) years in franchise operations
• The company must have a successful and effective franchise marketing program that contributed significantly to the franchise growth of the company and to the advancement of the franchising industry.

- Franchisee of the Year -
(one winner each in food, retail, service & kiosks)
• Open to all franchisees with single or multiple outlets with a nominating franchisor
• Minimum of two (2) consecutive years in franchise operations.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 7, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank, Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	1,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	30	30	30	30	78,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45.5	46	45	45.5	3,737,600
China Banking Corp.	770	770	770	770	200
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	400
Export and Ind. Bank, Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	690,000
Equitable PCI Bank, Inc.	47.5	48.5	47.5	48.5	183,400
International Exch. Bank	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	15,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	25.5	27	25.5	26	2,676,100
Philippine National Bank	42	43	42	43	61,400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	3,000
Security Bank Corp.	25.5	26.5	25.5	26	1,336,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	265	270	265	265	260
Manulife Financial Corp.	2640	2640	2640	2640	410
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1850	1870	1850	1870	2,070
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.5	104,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.97	0.99	0.96	0.97	7,830,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	805	820	805	820	28,140
Ipeople Inc.	3.45	3.55	3.45	3.5	65,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.044	0.045	0.044	0.045	6,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	14,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.5	2.65	2.5	2.55	4,266,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1535	1575	1535	1565	311,130
Philweb Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	600,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14	14.75	14	14.75	1,700
Manila Electric Co. B	23	23.75	23	23.25	1,396,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.2	6.4	6.2	6.3	4,745,000
Petron Corp.	2.65	2.75	2.65	2.7	5,634,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	50,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	5,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.2	7.4	7.2	7.4	103,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	220,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	50,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.8	9,217,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	50,000
Supercity Rlty Dev. Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.05	3.3	3.05	3.3	25,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	2,200
Jollibee Foods Corp.	27.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	523,000
San Miguel Corp. A	59.5	60	59.5	60	41,700
San Miguel Corp. B	91	92	91	92	87,500
Universal Robina Corp.	16	16.25	16	16.25	102,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	650,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	277.5	285	275	280	284,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.38	0.45	0.38	0.45	150,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.6	4.7	4.55	4.7	612,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.025	0.023	0.024	13,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.86	1.9	1.86	1.9	1,111,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.105	0.105	500,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.98	1.04	0.98	1	20,070,000
Crown Equities, Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	1,000,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.22	300,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.34	2.26	2.26	4,608,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.02	1,942,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	6.2	6.2	5.6	5.7	4,580,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	39	40.5	39	40	1,255,400
Ionics Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.08	1.1	378,000
J.G. Summit Holdings, Inc.	3.2	3.25	3	3	3,513,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.82	102,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.14	1.2	1.14	1.18	8,820,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	26,970,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.18	0.185	0.18	0.185	30,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
SM Investments Corp.	252.5	252.5	248	249	544,110
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.16	0.165	3,100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	7,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.69	0.69	170,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	1,800,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.02	5,817,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	7.9	7.9	6	6	6,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	50,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.06	1,310,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	30,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Abs-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	10.5	10.75	10.5	10.75	114,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.1	7.4	7.1	7.4	10,084,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.84	0.85	0.84	0.84	550,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	980,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.2	0.18	0.185	240,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.12	0.125	0.12	0.125	40,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	2,670,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.3	1.32	1.28	1.3	7,338,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.185	0.19	0.185	0.19	810,000
SM Development Corp.	1.46	1.5	1.46	1.5	139,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.3	8,466,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co., Inc.B	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	10,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	16,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.9	5	4.8	4.8	333,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.32	3,110,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.014	181,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.017	0.019	0.017	0.019	51,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	126,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.8	0.81	0.8	0.81	420,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.89	0.92	0.89	0.92	3,730,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	24.5	25.5	24.5	25	616,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	400,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	1,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.13	3,500,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	500,000

DISCLOSURES

PRUDENTIAL Bank reelected the following to their posts: Jose Santos as chair, Francisco Delgado as vice chair and Felipe Gella as corporate secretary.

***

THE RESIGNATION of **Republic Cement Corp.** vice president for operations Jung Rak Kim will take effect on the close of business hours of July 31.

***

ZIPPORAH Realty Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 5, 4 p.m., at Club Filipino, Eisenhower St. cor. Club Filipino Ave., Greenhills, San Juan. Stockholders of record as of July 8 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

July 7, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.838082	1.000000	56.1290
Japan	Yen	0.007473	0.008917	0.5005
United Kingdom	Pound	1.470919	1.755100	98.5120
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.107823	0.128654	7.2212
Switzerland	Franc	0.643639	0.767990	43.1065
Canada	Dollar	0.677841	0.808800	45.3971
Singapore	Dollar	0.494036	0.589484	33.0871
Australia	Dollar	0.621539	0.741620	41.6264
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.223149	2.652661	148.8912
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.223483	0.266660	14.9674
Brunei	Dollar	0.492584	0.587751	32.9899
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000102	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020156	0.024050	1.3499
UAE	Dirham	0.228186	0.272272	15.2824
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.193200	66.9731
Argentina	Peso	0.290748	0.346921	19.4723
Brazil	Real	0.351471	0.419375	23.5391
Denmark	Kroner	0.134173	0.160095	8.9860
India	Rupee	0.019288	0.023015	1.2918
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220577	0.263193	14.7728
Mexico	New Peso	0.077784	0.092812	5.2094
New Zealand	Dollar	0.566195	0.675584	37.9199
Norway	Kroner	0.126149	0.150521	8.4486
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014060	0.016776	0.9416
South Africa	Rand	0.122473	0.146135	8.2024
Korea	Won	0.000800	0.000954	0.0535
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026291	0.031371	1.7608

Shares rise 1.89% . . .

From page B1

ture of President Macapagal-Arroyo, dealers said.

They said some investors looked past Arroyo's problems to take positions in companies expected to report strong first half earnings but, overall, quick profit-taking is likely given the shaky political environment and the pressure on the peso.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 34.28 points to 1,847.32 after trading between 1,813.04 and 1,851.62. Turnover was 573.36 million shares worth P1.5 billion.

The broader all-shares index rose 14.10 points to 1,135.85.

Gainers beat losers 58 to 16, with 33 stocks steady.

"Investors bought oversold stocks although some of them were looking for quick profits given the volatile state of the market," said Mark Alan Canizares of Citiseconline.com.

The equities market as well as the peso have fallen as the opposition has stepped up calls for the President to resign, following allegations that she cheated her way to victory in last year's election. *AFP*

PNCC approves start of ₱11-B SLEX upgrade

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE National Construction Corp. has given MTD Manila Expressway Corp. the go-ahead to start the P11-billion upgrade of the South Luzon Expressway.

MTD Manila Expressway, a unit of Malaysia's MTD Capital, has turned over $2.5 million in earnest money to the PNCC as a proof of its financial capability.

"This also represents MTD's advance funding for the SLEX project," said PNCC president Arthur Aguilar in an interview.

The fund was turned over as the Malaysian firm applied for a supplemental Toll Operations Agreement the other day.

The SLEX upgrade involves the rehabilitation of the Alabang viaduct (Toll Road 1) in Muntinlupa City, the expansion of the Alabang to Sta. Rosa portion to eight lanes, the Sta. Rosa to Calamba segment expansion to six lanes (Toll Road 2) and the widening of the Calamba to Sto. Tomas road to four lanes (Toll Road 3).

MTD Capital is the second-largest toll operator in Malaysia. The listed company also has active projects in Indonesia.

PNCC nullified its agreement with Hopewell Crown early this year. MTD Capital, as the new owner of the project appealed the decision.

MTD Manila Expressway Corp. is the new name of Hopewell Crown Infrastructure Inc.

Control of Hopewell Crown has changed hands three times since the original owner, Hong Kong's Hopewell Holdings Ltd. of Gordon Wu signed an agreement in 1999 to rehabilitate and operate the SLEX.

The Malaysian toll operator now owns 67 percent of the company and has the option to control up to 77 percent. Northeast Development and Acquisitions Corp., a Filipino group that acquired rights over Hopewell Crown last year sold its stake to MTD.

Mark Dumol, officer-in-charge of MTD in the Philippines said that 33 percent of the company might be sold to a strategic partner.

The Malaysian firm will soon start negotiations with the Toll Regulatory Board for the Stoa.

GIR hits all-time high of $17.6B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S gross international reserves reached an all-time high of $17.66 billion as of end-June, shored up by national government deposits and earnings from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' overseas investments.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco yesterday said the country's GIR increased by 2.2 percent in June from $17.28 billion a month ago.

The GIR—consisting of the BSP's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, special drawing rights from multilateral institutions and foreign investments—is an indicator of the country's ability to service its foreign exchange requirements mainly for importation or debt servicing.

The GIR build-up also provides psychological support for the peso by improving the BSP's capacity to quell speculative attacks against the local currency.

Tetangco said the BSP would continue allowing the market to determine the foreign exchange rate and that the institution would come in only if needed.

"The foreign exchange inflows, however, were partly offset by the foreign exchange requirements for the repayment of maturing NG and BSP obligations," he said.

He said the end-June GIR level could cover about four months of importation and payments for services.

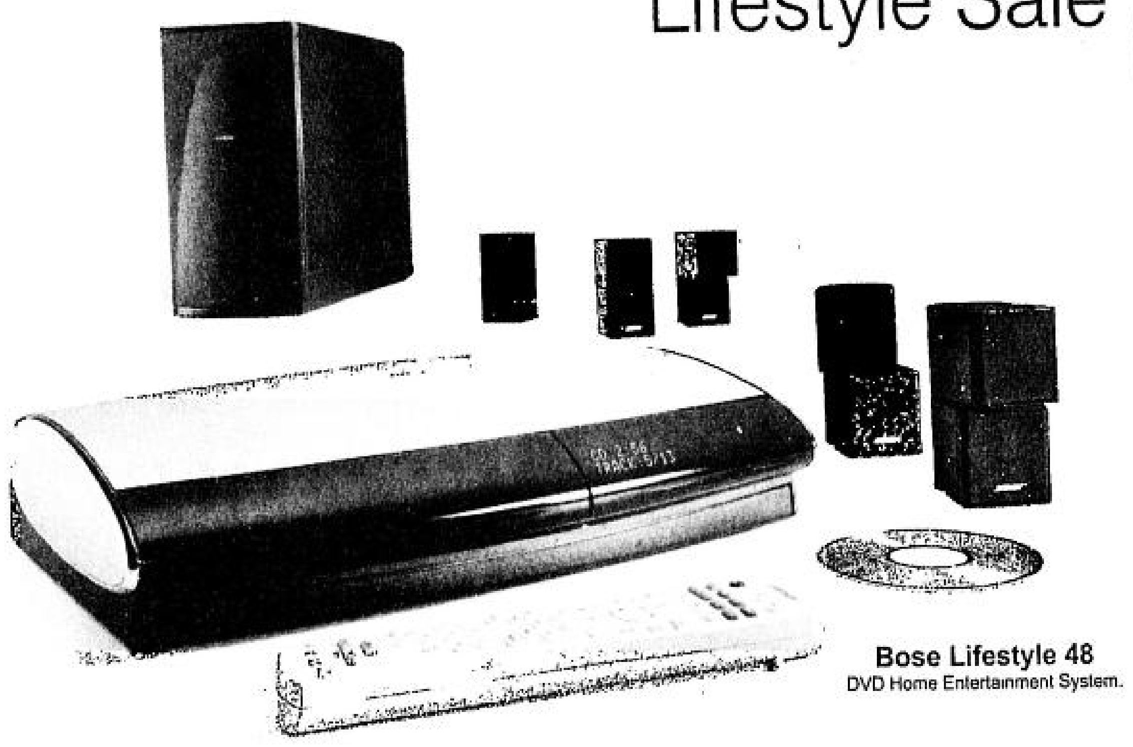
This level was also equivalent to 3.2 times the country's short-term debt based on original maturity and 1.7 times based on residual maturity," Tetangco said.

While there was no new global bond offering in June, the government made new foreign exchange deposit placements with the BSP most likely from overseas development assistance.facilities made available by multilateral and bilateral lenders.

The government earlier announced plans to increase use of official development assistance from multilateral and bilateral donors to lower the cost of foreign borrowings.

It was planning to tap about $900 million worth of ODAs this year, representing 22.5 percent of its $4-billion foreign borrowing requirement.

The strong GIR build-up since the start of the year has been aided by proceeds from public sector borrowings.



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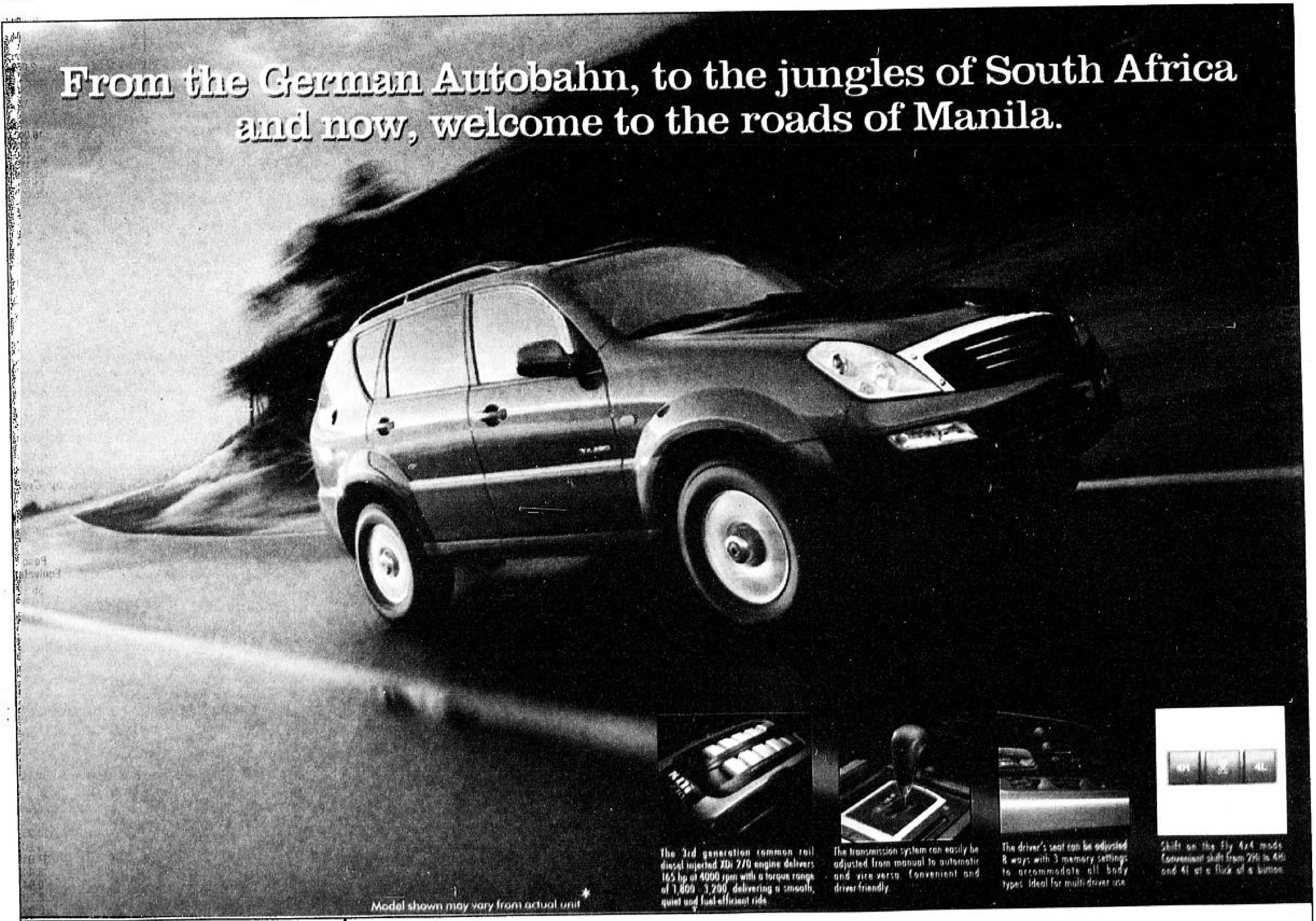
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Japan to sell $4.6-B stake in JR Tokai

TOKYO—The Japanese government on Thursday unveiled plans to sell up to $4.6 billion of shares in Central Japan Railway Co. (JR Tokai) as part of its efforts to trim the country's massive public debt.

The Japan Railway Construction, Transport and Technology Agency said it planned to sell up to 600,000 JR Tokai shares, or about a 27 percent stake.

That would be worth some 520 billion yen ($4.64 billion) at JR Tokai's closing price on Thursday.

The government body currently owns 886,000 shares in the railway operator, or 39.6 percent of the total.

JR Tokai, which runs bullet trains between Tokyo and the western city of Osaka, was created in 1987 in the privatization of Japanese National Railways (JNR), a heavily indebted state monopoly that was split into seven Japan Railways (JR) group companies.

The final offering price and number of shares to be sold will be set between July 22 and 27, following a book-building period scheduled to start on July 15.

Nomura Holdings Inc., Japan's largest brokerage, and UBS of Switzerland were hired on April 12 to lead-manage the offering.

The global offering, which could generate about 5.8 billion yen in underwriting fees, was widely expected as the government had said it planned to finish selling JR Tokai shares by March 2008 as part of a long-running program to offload assets and cut debt.

Japan's outstanding public-sector debt reached a record 751 trillion yen ($6.7 trillion) at the end of December—about 150 percent of gross domestic product.

Seeking to reduce that figure, the government, which has fully privatized two other rail firms—East Japan Railway Co. (JR East) and West Japan Railway Co. (JR West)—is unloading more of its shares in former state monopolies.

It sold $2.07 billion of shares in Japan Tobacco Inc., the world's third-largest tobacco group, in April 2004, following a $2.3 billion offering of JR West stock the previous month.

The government also plans to sell its $4.7-billion stake in former telecommunications monopoly Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. by March 2006, reducing its holding in Japan's dominant telecom firm to near the legal minimum of one-third. *Reuters*

Oil at new high, scares markets

A WORKER fills a motorbike with fuel at a petrol station in Bangkok. With global crude oil prices hovering around record highs, governments across Asia are facing political storms after scrapping fuel subsidies or raising prices at the pump by up to 29 percent to relieve pressure on budgets. AFP

LONDON—Oil prices surged to a new record of $62 a barrel on Thursday as the year's first Atlantic hurricane threatened US Gulf production and refining, stoking fears about pre-winter stock building.

US light crude for August delivery by yesterday afternoon set a new high at $62.10, up 82 cents. Brent crude in London climbed 85 cents to $60.70 a barrel, also a new record.

Oil prices are up nearly 50 percent from the start of the year as traders fear refiners are ill-prepared to meet peak seasonal demand this winter, especially for distillate fuels diesel and heating oil.

Storms in the US Gulf of Mexico compounded those anxieties by threatening both crude production and refinery operations, impairing oil companies' ability to build up supplies.

Tropical Storm Dennis was upgraded on Wednesday to become the season's first official hurricane as it moved through the central Caribbean, putting it on track for the oil and natural gas fields off the Gulf Coast on Sunday, the National Hurricane Center said.

Cindy forced energy companies to shut in some 190,000 barrels per day (bpd) of output and some refinery units to close, officials and the US government said.

The unusually early appearance of four named storms backed up forecasts of an active Atlantic hurricane season and evoked memories of last September's Ivan, which knocked out 45 million barrels of Gulf output and helped oil prices climb past $50 a barrel for the first time.

"A hurricane should have this kind of impact," said Tetsu Emori, chief commodities strategist at Mitsui Bussan Futures.

"There are no bearish factors in the market. It is very difficult to see prices going down quickly."

Oil prices have rocketed despite the absence of any sudden supply outages in the first half of this year, with speculators focused on prospects for a tight fourth quarter.

"Traders are betting this run of luck wouldn't continue for the northern winter build-up—so Hurricane Dennis is, in a sense, part of the script," Tobin Gorey, commodity analyst for the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, said in a note.

Speculators are betting that refiners will be hard pressed to build up enough inventories of distillate fuels heating oil and diesel before the winter.

In June, US distillates demand averaged an unusually strong 5.7 percent more than the same period last year and gasoline demand was 2 percent higher, US data showed.

Although US crude oil inventories are healthy at near their highest in six years, distillate stocks are in the lower half of their normal range for this time of year.

US data due late yesterday was forecast to show crude stocks down 1.1 million barrels but distillates inventories up 1.3 million barrels as refiners ramp up runs, analysts polled by Reuters said on Wednesday.

Opec (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) should wait and see what prices do before reviving discussion of a second production hike of 500,000 bpd, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh said on Wednesday.

Opec president Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahd al-Sabah said last week the cartel would consider raising formal output limits if prices topped $60 again.

Analysts say more crude production is unlikely to cool a market that is rising due to refinery bottlenecks. *Reuters*

JP Morgan bearish on US, likes Japan

HONG KONG—The US Federal Reserve will raise interest rates more than people expect and US corporate earnings are going to disappoint, slicing 6 to 7 percent off the S&P 500 index this year, investment bank JPMorgan said.

Equity markets are also too optimistic on economic growth and oil prices, global equity strategist Abhijit Chakrabortti told a media briefing in Hong Kong on Thursday.

"All of these factors could start feeding through and really start hurting overall growth," he warned. "My concern is next year when the economy begins to downshift below trend, that's when the markets are really going to have a bad year."

Given the bearish US outlook, export-driven Asian markets are unlikely to do better, he said.

"If China slows down, I don't think you can have a hope in hell with any material stocks in the world, so you don't want to be buying steel stocks or chemical stocks in Japan," said Chakrabortti.

"But I'm very bullish on Japanese financials," he said, adding an expected return of inflation to Japan and the removal of the zero interest rate policy by the Bank of Japan would be positive for the sector.

Chakrabortti believes India is the most exciting market in the region, with services outsourcing likely to remain a major driver for Asia's fourth-largest economy.

"The quality of Indian companies remains some of the best in the region and also India is a very well diversified market," he said, but added the market is no longer cheap at near 14 times earnings.

Chakrabortti favors stocks such as ICICI Bank Ltd., motorcycle maker Hero Honda Motors Ltd., and top cement group Grasim Industries Ltd.

A flat yield curve, stronger US dollar, rising wage costs and higher input prices from record oil and commodity prices are likely to slow US earnings growth, he predicted.

"All the favorable factors that drove earnings in the last three years and made us very bullish are changing," he said, pointing to recent warnings from firms such as air-express carrier FedEx Corp. and International Paper.

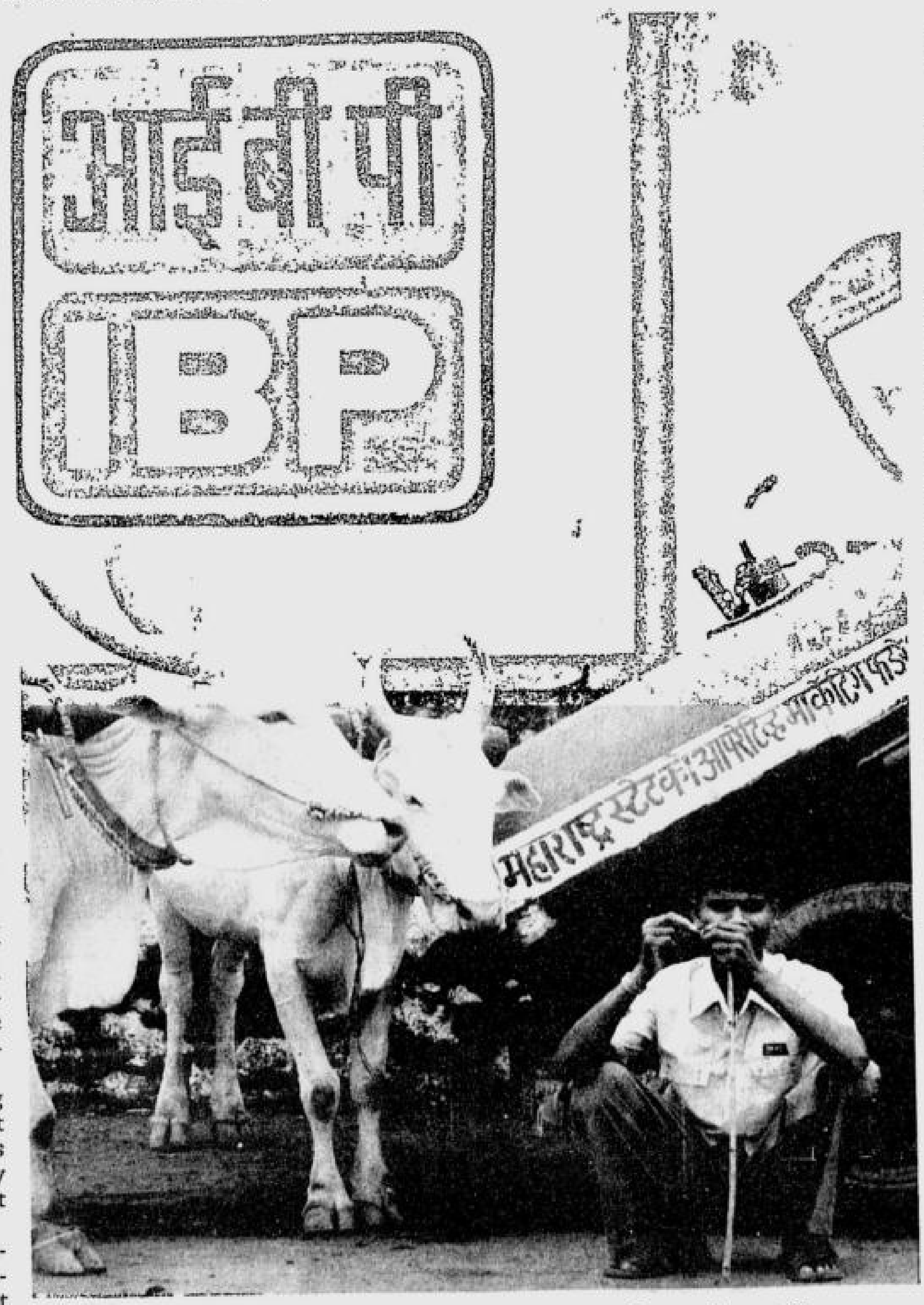
The current reporting season is expected to show US corporate profit growth slowing to its lowest level in two years.

According to data from Reuters Estimates, expectations for profits at companies in the S&P 500 index have slipped to 7.1 percent, well off from the 25.7 percent growth seen in the second quarter of 2004.

Crude prices hit a record high of $61.63 a barrel on Thursday and last week the Fed flagged more interest rate hikes after lifting its target funds rate for the ninth straight time to 3.25 percent.

JP Morgan sees the Fed raising rates at every meeting for the rest of the year and expects the funds rate to be at 4.25 percent by yearend. It sees the oil price at $40 to $70 this year.

Chakrabortti is negative on financial and cyclical stocks, cautious on the retail sector but bullish on oil services and equipment companies, healthcare and food and beverage producers such as Nestle, Unilever, Cadbury and Kellogg. *Reuters*



AN INDIAN kerosene dealer waits with his bullock-drawn cart for supplies outside a petroleum company in Mumbai. India's federal cabinet last month raised gasoline and diesel prices by as much as 7.0 percent to offset higher international oil prices which rose to $62 a barrel. Oil consumption in India has been steadily increasing in the rapidly growing economy as industries have stepped up production and automobile ownership grows. AFP

China firm still keen on Unocal bid

SINGAPORE—CNOOC Ltd. will meet all conditions set by takeover target Unocal Corp. for its board to recommend the Chinese company's bid over one from Chevron Corp., a person close to the situation said on Thursday.

But the source, who said the talks "are going well," added that Unocal is still trying to decide whether CNOOC's proposed $18.5 billion offer price justifies the regulatory and political risks that could delay or block approval of a deal.

"Unocal is trying to strike a fine balance between the premium in the CNOOC offer and the regulatory uncertainty associated with the bid," the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told Reuters.

"They have to consider the two elements," said the source, who is familiar with the merger talks between the state-run Chinese company and California-based Unocal.

The largest Chinese offshore oil producer is competing head-on with global oil major Chevron to acquire Unocal, whose oil and gas assets are mainly in Asia.

All-cash offer

CNOOC's all-cash offer, largely backed by Chinese government-owned entities, tops Chevron's stock-and-cash bid of more than $16 billion.

Unocal and CNOOC executives have been meeting on the proposed bid since shortly after CNOOC made its offer two weeks ago.

But so far, Unocal management is continuing to recommend the Chevron deal to its shareholders, who are due to meet on Aug. 10 to vote on Chevron's bid.

The source said Unocal is requiring CNOOC to meet certain conditions before it would consider recommending the Chinese bid.

"CNOOC will be able to meet all the points raised by Unocal," the source said, but declined to specify those conditions.

Chevron's spokesperson, Don Campbell, reiterated the company position: "Our agreement remains the only offer on the table. The Unocal board continues to stand behind our agreement and recommend it to its shareholders."

Stiff opposition

CNOOC's bid has sparked strong opposition from some US lawmakers, who express concerns that a sale of Unocal to CNOOC would hurt US energy security.

That has raised concerns that a CNOOC-Unocal deal could be rejected by US authorities.

CNOOC chair Fu Chengyu, in an interview with the Washington Post, said that CNOOC may consider raising its bid if that is what it takes to win the deal.

CNOOC has also asked a top-level US government panel, the Committee on Foreign Investments in the United States (CFIUS), to review its bid and allay concerns that it might threaten US energy security.

"We are busy discussing things. I have a lot of confidence," CNOOC chief financial officer Yang Hua told Reuters after returning to Beijing following discussions with Unocal's executives in New York.

Despite the competitive tension between Chevron and CNOOC over Unocal, Yang said the business relationship between the two companies remains normal. *Reuters*

World economy heating up, economists say

WASHINGTON—The global economy seems to be heating up again as the northern summer nears its height.

After months of unease among policy-makers and economists over the durability of the world expansion, there are tentative signs that activity picked up at mid-year.

Record oil prices over $60 per barrel are acting as a headwind, economists say, but there is no evidence yet high energy costs threaten an inexorable slide into recession.

If anything, high oil prices are reflecting the persistent strength of activity and underlying demand for crude.

Monthly surveys of some 10,000 companies around the world showed business revved up again in June—with output, new orders and employment all picking up pace during the month and the manufacturing sector leading the way.

Analysts say these surveys of corporate executives from North America, Europe and Asia indicate annualized gross domestic product growth of about 3.5 percent in the third quarter.

That is shy of the International Monetary Fund's April forecast of a 4.3 percent world growth rate in 2005, but up more than half a point from second-quarter estimates and close to the 20-year average world growth rate of 3.6 percent.

"The results point to a modest acceleration in global GDP growth in the third quarter to about 3.5 percent," said David Hensley, director of global economics coordination at JPMorgan, which aggregates and tracks these monthly worldwide surveys.

A global index, where a reading above 50 denotes expansion, edged up to 55.9 from 55.8 in May. New orders jumped more than a point to 55.5.

Some leading indicators of the world economy—many of which have been flagging gloom for months—have also started to show glimmers of light.

Goldman Sachs' in-house Global Leading Indicator rose to 1.9 percent year-on-year in June from 1.7 percent in May, with a measure of monthly momentum also picking up a notch.

Third-quarter corporate hiring plans around the world remain optimistic. Recruitment firm Manpower's quarterly survey of 45,000 firms in 23 countries last month showed a net 16 percent of firms planning more staff in the coming three months—up a point from this time last year.

Long-term borrowing costs remain at historic lows nearly everywhere—in most cases lower than they were at the start of the year. This has helped underwrite the US housing boom and most likely elsewhere too.

Larry Kantor, chief global economist at Barclays Capital, reckons it is this low long-term interest rate environment that is softening the blow from high oil prices.

"This balancing act between rising oil prices and falling bond yields has produced solid, if unspectacular, economic growth," said Kantor, who predicts world GDP growth at about 4 percent over the remainder of the year.

"The future course of activity depends importantly on how these two factors play out."

Nationally, Japan looks to be one of the upside surprises.

Its long-dormant economy, still the world's second-biggest when measured by market exchange rates, grew 4.9 percent in the first quarter. Domestic demand growth is robust and leading indicators bounced back strongly in May after an April lull.

US first-quarter growth was revised up to 3.8 percent from 3.5 percent, with manufacturing and consumer confidence all picking up again after a soft patch in the spring.

China—long a prime engine of the world economy—is showing more mixed signals. Investment and domestic demand growth remain strong, but oil consumption has tailed off and surveys of local purchasing managers showed a June slowdown.

The euro zone remains sluggish. But even there the mired retailing sector got a boost this week from news of an above-forecast 1.1 percent bounce in May sales, and new car sales in Italy, France and Spain all advanced in June. *Reuters*

No need to amend oil deregulation law, says panel

By Abigail L. Ho

THE INDEPENDENT panel tasked to review RA 8479 or the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Law said there was nothing wrong with the law and, therefore, no amendment was needed.

The panel, however, recommended that Petron Corp., which remained partly owned by the government, be made the "price moderator" for both price increases and rollbacks.

In a presentation yesterday, panel chair Carlos Alindada, former chair of SGV & Co. and former commissioner of the Energy Regulatory Commission, said it would not support or initiate any change to the Oil Deregulation Law in its current form.

He said the Department of Energy should work with the proposed price moderator.

Total (Philippines) Corp. president and managing director Jeff Attwood, however, expressed concern over this suggestion as this could be seen as a quasi-regulatory action.

"Our concern is really the Petron issue. We can't have the government exercising control through Petron. That's quasi-regulatory," he told reporters after yesterday's presentation.

He said that if this materialized, Total would have to slow down in its investment activities here. However, he said the company would not pull out of the Philippine market.

Rex Tantiongco, spokesperson for the new players' group, Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association, said making Petron a "price moderator" would not be fair to both the industry and even to Petron's shareholders.

He said that when Petron went public years ago, stockholders bought their shares at around P9 each. Now, these shares are traded on the Philippine Stock Exchange for only P3 per share.

Putting pressure on Petron to bring down prices could further hurt its share prices in the long run, he said.

"If there's an influence on Petron to adopt lower prices, other (oil firms) may be forced to close down. There will no longer be competition in the market, and that will be bad for consumers," he said.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. general manager for external affairs Roberto Kanapi, for his part, said the panel could have been referring to Petron's price leadership, being the company with the biggest market share.

If that was what the panel meant, he said there was no issue. The "moderator" role, however, would pose a problem.

On the part of Petron, public affairs manager Virginia Ruivivar said the role of price moderator was "unacceptable."

Alindada then clarified the panel's recommendation, saying the "price moderator" role would not entail any form of price regulation.

"Suasion is not an order. It's like we'll be asking them (Petron) for a favor, which can be either granted or denied," he explained.

The panel's other findings included the lack of viability of instituting a subsidy mechanism similar to the regulated era's Oil Price Stabilization Fund, the absence of cartels in the industry as far as tangible evidence was concerned, and the fact that oil firms actually earned more during the regulated regime than now.

It also recommended that a price adjustment mechanism be put in place for industries that are heavily dependent on oil, that the DOE continue to develop alternative energy sources and that the DOE be more vigilant in monitoring prices as well as in sensing the possible presence of cartels.

WTO used as scapegoat

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

LEADERS of the Alyansa Agrikultura yesterday decided to unite with industry leaders to forge common front for the ministerial meeting on the World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations this December in Hong Kong. The Alyansa is the largest farmer-fisherfolk coalition in the Philippines.

In a meeting, a unanimous decision was reached. If developed countries insisted on imposing undesirable agricultural tariff reductions on developing countries without correspondingly decreasing their unfair subsidies, we will work to stop the WTO Round. This is because "no deal is better than a bad deal." However, if both developed and developing countries work together in a spirit of enlightened self interest, we will work on progressive WTO provisions, such as special products. This way, the WTO meeting will be beneficial for all.

Common cause

Philippine agriculture and industry have a common cause in fighting for fair trade. Both have suffered job losses and increased poverty because of too rapid tariff reductions. This happened in areas where we have potential comparative advantage, but need more time to compete with cheap and often unfairly subsidized imports.

However, many blame the WTO for most of our trade-related problems. It has come to the point where the WTO is used as a convenient scapegoat when the problem really lies with us.

For example, while the WTO allowed a bound tariff of 40 percent on our vegetables, our government unilaterally imposed a 7 percent tariff on most of them. Thankfully, in recent years, the Department of Agriculture has corrected this by increasing the tariffs on some of our vegetables to more desirable levels.

Undervaluation

A more damaging example of using WTO as a scapegoat is the undervaluation of imported products. Agriculture can learn much from industry in this area.

The shoe industry has lost thousands of jobs because of undervaluation. According to Joel Gaudia of the Samahan ng Magsasapatos sa Pilipinas, imported "leather upper" shoes from China were valued at US$14 a pair in 1997 and paid the corresponding tariffs and value-added tax (VAT) on that basis.

Today, these same shoes are unfairly valued at $1.10, or only 8 percent of its former value. This is consistent with the information the Fair Trade Alliance gave the Alyansa Agrikultura a month ago. From 1999 to 2003, the volume of shoe imports from China increased 53 times. However, government revenue from these rose by only 3 times.

When Victoriano Sabiniano, SMP president, complained about in 1998, Customs officials used the WTO as a scapegoat. They quoted Art. 1 of the WTO's Rules of Customs Valuation.

This states: "The customs value of imported goods shall be the transaction value, that is the price actually paid or payable for the goods when sold for export to the country of importation…."

Consequently, whenever an importer presented an invoice (even though this may have been illegally tampered with) that listed $1.10 instead of $14.00 for a pair of leather shoes, the Customs examiner would tell Sabiniano he had no choice but to use it because of the WTO.

Late last year, Atty. Napoleon Ng of the Federation of Philippine Industries pointed out to the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Anti-Smuggling that the same Rules of Customs Evaluation has an Article 17. This states: "Nothing in this agreement shall be construed as restricting or calling into question the rights of custom's administration to satisfy themselves as to the truth or accuracy of any statement, documents, or declaration presented for customs' valuation purposes."

Other countries such as India take full advantage of Article 17. According to Jose Sereno, executive director of the Association of Petro Chemical Manufacturers of the Philippines, India passed a law which recognizes only correct transaction values, and only when done "in the ordinary course of trade … under fully competitive conditions."

Since early this year, the shoe industrial workers have been gaining ground. Sabiano said the Customs Valuation and Classification Review Committee was favorably considering his petition for correct valuation. Though a final decision has yet to come out after seven years of struggle, he commended the initiatives of Customs Commissioner Albert Lina for the progress achieved so far.

Conclusion

The undervaluation described above also occurs in agriculture, particularly in relation to sugar and sugar containing products.

As agriculture and industry unite in preparation for the WTO negotiations, both sectors should not be deceived by unscrupulous elements when they use WTO as a scapegoat for their decisions that jeopardize our very livelihoods. Rather, we should understand WTO regulations in detail, just as Ng and Sereno did, so that we can use the WTO to our advantage in the appropriate circumstances.

(The author is the chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary for agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil @yahoo.com or telefax 8516635)

Foreign groups keen on RP natural gas, wind power

A NUMBER of international financial institutions are keen on investing in the country's compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG) and wind power sectors, seeing the huge potential that the Philippines has in these three areas.

Energy Undersecretary Peter Abaya yesterday identified these institutions as International Risk Consultants Inc., United States Bank Corp., UEA Financials Inc., JP Morgan, Citibank Group, US Export-Import Bank and Overseas Private Investment Corp. He said meetings with these institutions had already been set.

In terms of investment, he said an LNG terminal for the transport sector, for example, would cost between $500 million and $1 billion, excluding the pipelines that would carry the natural gas from the source to the terminals.

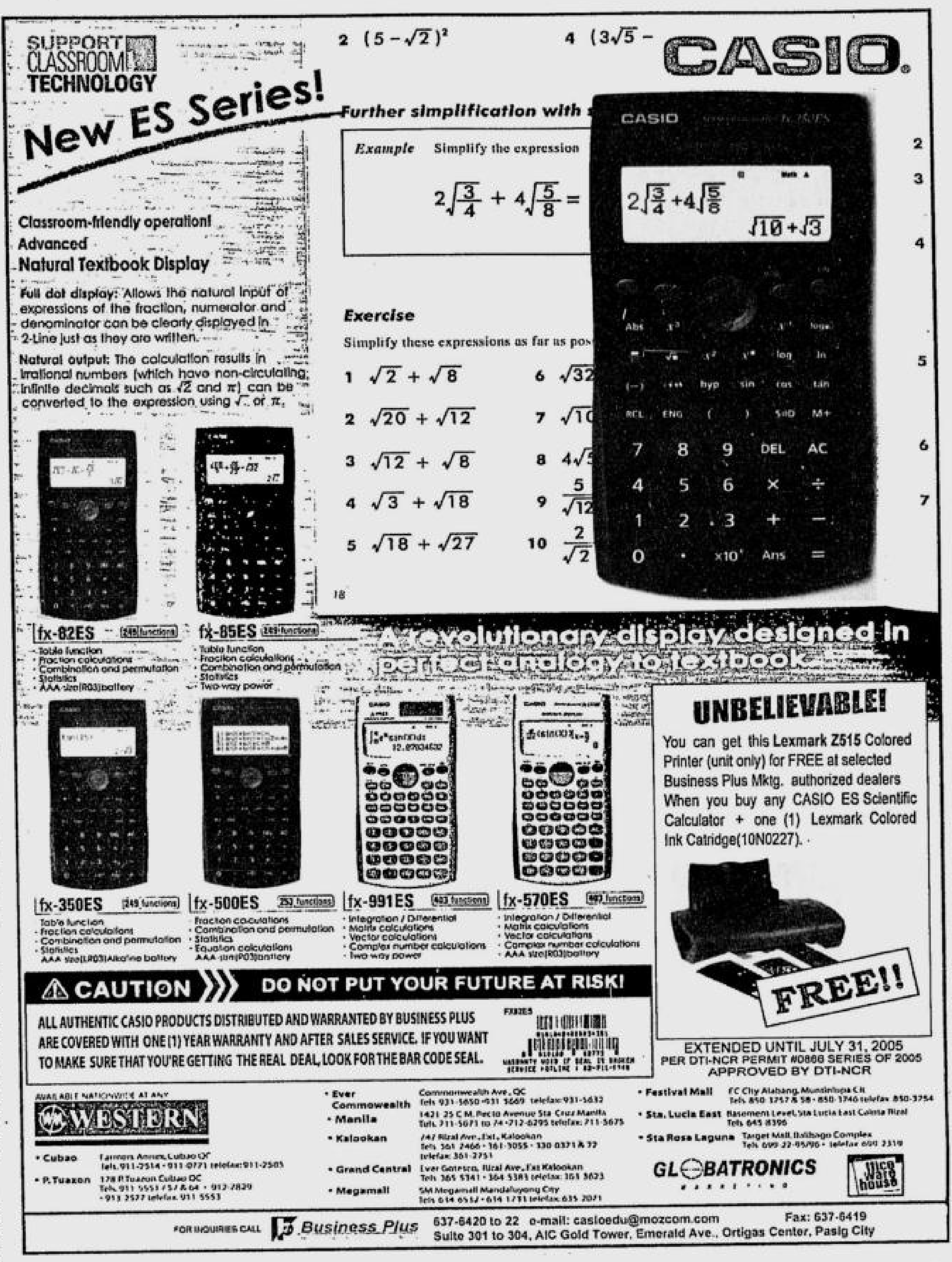
The government is currently pushing the use of CNG as an alternative fuel for the transport sector. A memorandum of agreement with Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power Project consortium member Shell Philippines Exploration BV pegs the price of CNG at only P14.52 per cubic meter, half the current price of diesel at around P29 a liter.

However, most of Malampaya's 3,000-MW capacity, roughly 2,700 MW, is being used to run three gas-fired power plants: the 1,000-MW Sta. Rita and 500-MW San Lorenzo of the Lopezes' First Gas Power Corp. and the 1,200-MW Ilijan plant being run by a consortium led by Korea Electric Power Corp.

Additional investments will have to be made to boost the consortium's current gas-production capacity.

On the wind power side, Abaya said the financial institutions also had "preliminary discussions" with the Department of Energy on possible investments in wind power development.

"They were actually surprised that the Philippines has more wind power potential at 76,000 megawatts (MW) than the United States," he told reporters. *Abigail L. Ho*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$\sqrt{10}+\sqrt{3}$
Exercise
Simplify these expressions as far as pos
1 $\sqrt{2}+\sqrt{8}$
2 $\sqrt{20}+\sqrt{12}$
3 $\sqrt{12}+\sqrt{8}$
4 $\sqrt{3}+\sqrt{18}$
5 $\sqrt{18}+\sqrt{27}$
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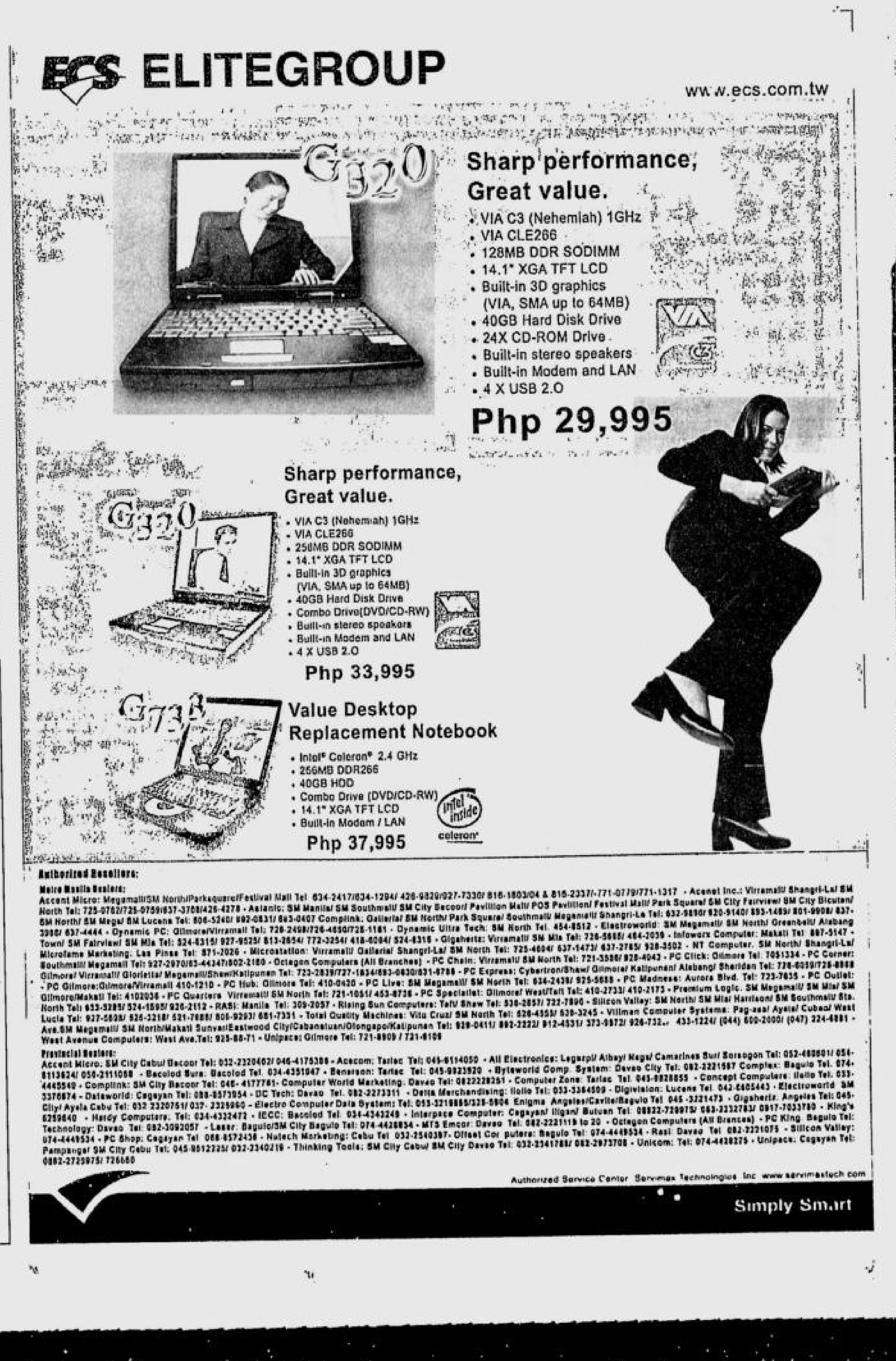
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BPI moving closer to acquiring Prudential Bank

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANK of the Philippine Islands, the country's second biggest bank, is moving closer to acquiring a majority stake in the Santos family's Prudential Bank, banking sources said.

A potential takeover of the much-smaller Prudential Bank is not yet enough to topple Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. as the country's biggest bank, but it will close the gap with the banking arm of taipan George Ty in terms of total resources.

Banking sources disclosed that majority of shareholders associated with the Santos family was now keen on selling their stake to BPI.

After months of negotiations, the sources said an agreement between the shareholders of the two publicly listed banks may be reached soon.

A ranking BPI source yesterday confirmed that lawyers of both BPI and the Santos family were now working on a possible deal, but would not elaborate.

Another banking source said the third-generation Santoses had long been wanting to retire from the banking business but the eldest among the cousins, Prudential Bank president Jose Santos, was reluctant "because of sentimental reasons."

The family, which controls about 70-80 percent of the bank, founded Prudential Bank in 1952.

In a separate interview, a high-ranking official of Prudential Bank yesterday confirmed offers to buy out the family's stake but stressed no deal was final.

"There have been many offers, but at the moment there is still nothing in," the source said.

BPI, for its part, had said it was on the hunt for new acquisitions after completing its integration with Far East Bank and Trust Co.

The BPI source said a fresh acquisition should not come as a surprise, given the bank's history of gobbling up other banks.

BPI has been growing through acquisitions to fast-track its growth.

It merged with Peoples Bank and Trust Co. in 1974, followed by the merger with Commercial Bank and Trust Co. in 1981, Ayala Investment and Development Corp. as well as Makati Leasing and Finance Corp. in 1982 and Family Bank and Trust Co. in 1985.

It continued its expansion with the acquisition of Citytrust Banking Corp. in 1996, Ayala Insurance Holdings Corp. in 2000, Far East Bank and Trust Co. in 2000 and DBS Bank Philippines in 2002.

As of the first quarter of this year, BPI has total resources of about P386 billion while Prudential has about P58 billion.

Their combined resources stand at P444 billion, against Metrobank's P461 billion.

Prudential Bank, the 18th biggest among commercial banks, has a loan portfolio of P12.8 billion and a deposit base of P43 billion.

"If this takeover is true, this is a good acquisition," said Alfred Dy, research head of stock brokerage CLSA Philippines.

"The main attraction of Prudential Bank is its branch network which shall enable BPI to expand market reach and augment its over 700 branches," he said. *With a report from Elizabeth L. Sanchez.*

MB approves Maynilad rehabilitation plan

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE MONETARY Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved the rehabilitation plan of Maynilad Water Services Inc.

This was confirmed by rehabilitation receiver Rosario Bernaldo in an interview with the INQUIRER yesterday.

Bernaldo said the approval would mean the payment of a combined $32 million to foreign and local bank creditors and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) by July 15.

The MB approval is a pre-requisite to the submission of Maynilad's corporate restructuring program to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

The water utility serves more than six million customers in the west zone covering Manila and neighboring cities.

It ran into financial difficulties due to its heavy debt burden and operational challenges.

The MWSS tops Maynilad's list of creditors with an exposure of P8 billion, representing unpaid concession fees.

The other creditors accounting for the remaining P10 billion include Credit Agricole, Indosuez Merchant Bank Asia Ltd., Citibank NA, Barclays Bank plc and BNP Paribas, Equitable-PCI Bank, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and the state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines.

Bernaldo added that the implementation of Maynilad's rehabilitation program would not be stopped by the petition for preliminary injunction filed by the civic groups before the Supreme Court.

According to the revised plan approved by Branch 90 of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, Maynilad's majority shareholder, Benpres Holdings Inc. (BHI) of the Lopez group, will formally exit and divest all its shares in the company valued at $22.7 million.

Shares of BHI's French partner, Ondeo Philippines (formerly known as Suez Lyonnais des Eaux), would also be reduced to 13 percent.

Bernaldo said that some 84 percent of Maynilad's shares would be up for subscription by the MWSS, which favored a debt- to-equity conversion.

The banks, on the other hand, preferred to be paid in cash.

Tupperware to sell beauty products

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PLASTICS firm Tupperware Co. is branching out to beauty products in a bid to push up sales and counter threats from multi-product, direct-selling competitors.

Jose de Jesus Buenrostro, president of Tupperware Philippines Inc., said in a briefing that the United States-based mother company had bought a firm called Beauty Control three years ago as part of its diversification efforts.

"Beauty Control was serving only the US market before Tupperware bought it," Jesus said. "We are launching this outside the US starting with the Philippines, Brazil and Venezuela."

Jesus explained that Tupperware Philippines expected beauty products to make up 10-15 percent of sales by 2006.

"We are striving for a 50-50 split between our traditional storage products and beauty products, which we hope to achieve in five to six years," the Mexican expatriate said.

Also, Jesus said the company had embarked on a campaign to strengthen its sales force in terms of numbers and market coverage.

"We aim at having 25,000 active sales (agents) that are reaching 25,000 households at any given time," he said.

As for sales revenue, the firm has a target growth rate of 35 percent.

"Last year, Tupperware Philippines was adjudged 'turnaround company of the year' in the global Tupperware network," Jesus said.

He said that, in the previous years, Tupperware Philippines' sales contracted with the rise of other direct-selling firms that offer a variety of product lines to consumers.

Further, Jesus said Tupperware would continue to sell its products by direct-selling and would never resort to retailers with stores.

Tupperware Philippines' production plant in Canlubang, Laguna—which is the biggest in Tupperwares' Asia-Pacific operations—can yield 220,000 cartons of products a year.

The company exports 30 percent of its output to Australia, Japan and even the United States.

Cocktales

From page B3

the central bank's policy-making body had earlier ordered disposed of no later than 2001, considering that at least P6.67 billion in bank funds were used by the Go family of Equitable Bank to acquire the block in its 1999 buyout of PCIBank.

Equitable PCIBank comptroller Ricardo Martin also said the Monetary Board was equally wrong to order EBC Investments to provide additional capital as a result of its money-losing placements.

"(The) EPCIB profitability, which was accompanied by an equally dramatic rise in its traded share prices…clearly established that provisioning for the EPCIB shares held by EBC Investments is unnecessary," Martin said.

From an average price of P96/share, Equitable PCIBank shares have been trading at less than P50, resulting in a more than P3.3-billion loss for EBC Investments. After a four-year grace period, a concerned Monetary Board finally ordered the investment bank to submit a capital buildup program no later than the end of the month.

Despite the 50-percent drop since 1999, EBC Investments has adamantly refused to write down the value of the 10 percent block. According to Martin, the new, tougher accounting and banking rules applies only "if there is a permanent decline in the value of the security."

(Nilo Divina, Equitable PCIBank general counsel and corporate secretary, declined to define what "permanent decline" means, or even give a time frame for it.)

And, in a leaf from Creative Accounting 101, the Equitable PCIBank comptroller also maintained that the subsidiary's projected losses would not impact on the bottom line of the parent bank.

"The change in accounting policy does not affect the financial health of a company as it merely changes the method by which parent company financials are reported," Martin wrote the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Gold and Silverios

THE SILVERIO family feud is worsening, with Rep. Lorna Silverio now writing President Arroyo to remove Insurance Commissioner Benjamin Santos, for his alleged "prying into private lives" and for his "unethical, tasteless and improper" investigation of the Silverio-owned Centennial Guarantee Assurance Corp.

Silverio, who chairs the committee on inter-parliamentary relations and diplomacy, is being sued along with her husband, Ricardo Silverio Sr., by Silverio's own son, Ricardo Jr. over the control of Centennial Guarantee.

The junior Silverio, the polo player and not the flamenco dancer-painter we reported on Wednesday (that one happens to be Dante, Ricardo Junior's stepbrother), had asked for the help of the Insurance Commission to pursue his majority claims over the family-owned insurance company.

Heard through the grapevine

DESPITE their children having all moved to their respective houses years ago, celebrity couple Mely and Paeng Hechanova are giving the construction industry a boost by completely renovating their already fabulous home in North Forbes into what neighbors say would be a French chateau replica, complete with a ballroom.

(Cocktales may be reached at cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com.)

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DAY ONE - July 26, 2005

08:00 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 - 09:20	Welcome Remarks by *Krish Datta, Managing Director, SAP Philippines and Indonesia*
09:20 - 09:50	Keynote: Driving Local Competitiveness of Philippine Businesses
09:50 - 10:30	Keynote: View from SAP, *Alan Sedghi, Managing Director, SAP South Asia*
10:30 - 11:00	Keynote: View from IBM
11:00 - 12:00	Lunch
12:00 - 01:30	NETWORKING FAIR: *Visit booths of Summit exhibitors for live demos, one-on-one discussions, freebies and the chance to win exciting prizes.*
01:30 - 04:30	INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC TRACK SESSIONS: *Learn about the latest trends and business best practices from local and international experts in Consumer Packaged Goods, Retail, Financial Services, High Tech, Telco, Public Services, Utilities and Oil & Gas.*

DAY TWO - July 27, 2005

08:30 - 09:30	Registration
09:00 - 09:45	SAP Technology Vision: ESA is the Wave of the Future, *David Payne, Senior Manager, Market Development, SAP NetWeaver*
09:45 - 10:00	Break
11:40 - 12:25	SOLUTION TRACK SESSIONS: *Discover how SAP solutions such as Analytics, Customer Relationship Management, NetWeaver, Human Capital Management, Supply Chain Management, Supplier Relationship Management and Enterprise Resource Planning can help companies achieve real growth, real success and real profit!*
12:30 - 01:30	End of Session / Closing Ceremonies / Lunch
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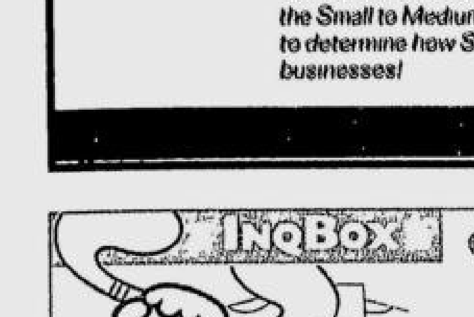

INQBOX Question of the Week

If you were President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and faced with the current controversies, what would you do?

Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Shirt! U

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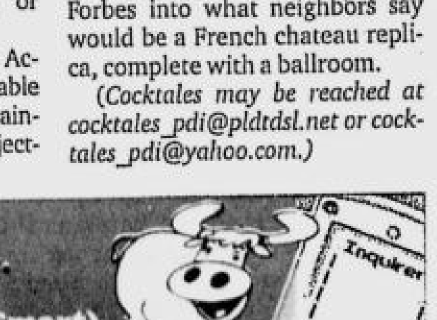

People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
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Editor Aries Espinosa

DHL launches SMS delivery notification service

DHL EXPRESS Philippines has launched its Short Messaging Service (SMS) delivery notification service that informs customers upon the delivery of their packages. The new SMS service allows DHL's customers to receive fast and timely communication through their respective cellular networks.

DHL Express Philippines country manager Larry Llamzon said, "The new SMS delivery notification service is applicable to all cash transaction customers who indicate their cellphone numbers on their air waybills. Once the delivery has reached its destination, customers will receive an SMS with the air waybill number, time and date of actual delivery, and other receiver details. This enhanced service would lessen their concerns regarding the status of their deliveries."

For the benefit of customers, Llamzon added, DHL will continue to pioneer innovative services that complement the company's vast portfolio of express services. He noted, "We are using SMS not only to communicate with our customers, but also as a key tool in providing fast and efficient express service."

A customer feedback survey conducted in February and March 2005 revealed that DHL customers would find an SMS service useful, as it provides sufficient and relevant information. "Most of our customers said that receiving firsthand information about the status of their deliveries gave them peace of mind and confidence in the services DHL provides," Llamzon said.

DEALERS' NIGHT

Keylargo, one of the biggest car accessories company and exclusive distributors of the now popular Sony Xplod In-Car-Entertainment systems, recently held its first dealers' night at the Hotel Rembrandt. The event also coincided with the launch of Sony Xplod's product line of different car audio and video systems. In attendance were Keylargo executives led by COO Julie Gamboa (right), special guest Haruhito Tanigawa, managing director, Sony Electronics Pte LTD, and Keylargo's extensive network of dealers and automotive company representatives. 'We are happy with the turnout and this event is our way of thanking the dealers for making Sony Xplod one of the most sought after audio-video systems in the country today,' adds Gamboa. Shown with Julie at a display of Sony's product line is Mario Gamboa, CEO of Keylargo. Being in the market for just a few months, Sony Xplod has captivated the audio market with its innovative smart slot, flip down and slot-in head units; light and powerful speaker systems, turbo subwoofers and powerful Stream Regnum amplifiers. Sony Xplod audio and video systems are available in car accessory shops nationwide.

World franchise event reaching out to SMEs

THE ORGANIZER of the grand international franchise event slated in Manila next month is reaching out to the country's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to help turn them into viable and lucrative franchises.

This was announced by the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA), the organizer of the Philippine International Franchise Conference and Expo (Pifce) 2005 slated at the World Trade Center Metro Manila on July 15 to 17.

The pioneer and most respected franchise organization in the country, the PFA will have a "Franchise Incubation Center" at the Pifce 2005 principally for the SMEs, which actually account for the biggest bulk of the country's business enterprises.

"Including micro-enterprises, the SMEs comprise a total of 808,634 companies, or 99.6 percent of the country's 811,592 firms. Yet, the SMEs, which also account for 70 percent of national employment, contribute only 32 percent to our total gross domestic product (GDP). Pifce 2005 can, therefore, help our SMEs increase productivity and product quality, expand their markets, and ultimately attain economies of scale through franchising," said PFA president Bing S. Limjoco.

"That is the reason why the PFA is allocating a bigger space for the expo's Franchise Incubation Center this year, which is to accommodate more SMEs and provide them with full assistance in franchise development," Limjoco explained.

A joint project of the PFA and the Department of Trade and Industry, the incubation center will assist and feature SMEs and start-up companies that are potential franchisors.

"These SMEs may start out as branded kiosks, but which can eventually grow nationally and globally," Limjoco added. Some of the successful franchises that started at Pifce's Incubation Center include Reyes Haircutters, Hotshots, Delifresh, Ibay Silver Shop, Fruit Haven, Kettle Korn, H Salon, Sweet Dreams, Kiss King of Balls, and Krispy Kimpao.

Dubbed as "Franchise 2005", the event is being supported by the Asia Pacific Franchise Confederation and the World Franchise Council, and will be participated in by successful local and international franchises, including those from the United Kingdom, Malaysia, and Thailand, among many others.

Franchise 2005 will occupy Halls B and C of the World Trade Center Metro Manila as it is geared to surpass its last year's record turnout of more than 15,000 visitors, around 250 concepts, and over $5.4 million (P300 million) worth of new businesses.

Franchise Expo 2005 will also include seminars on how to franchise your business, and presentations on various aspects of franchising and available franchise opportunities.

Other expo details can be obtained from exhibit manager Worldexco (891-8638, 834-7505; fax 834-0608; or e-mail mktg@worldexco.com).

Pifce is the country's biggest and longest-running annual international franchise event that now spans 13 years. Through Pifce, the PFA spearheaded the growth of the Philippine franchise industry from only 50 franchises in the early 90s to over 850 in 2004. This growth has directly led to the increase of industry sales turnover from just $936 million in 1997 to over $2 billion last year.

Build your own success story in 10 ways

HAVING a hard time making ends meet? Desperately seeking ways to augment your family's income? Ready to give up?

Listen to Aloe Vera of Australia chief executive officer Jennifer McDougall as she shares her success story on July 9, 4 to 8 p.m. at the SM Megamall Megatrade Conference Halls A and B. Admission is free.

From a small cottage operation with only a dozen Aloe Vera plants, McDougall has turned her business into one of the world's largest Aloe Vera companies. She and her research and development head Dr. Cherie De Haas will talk about their best-kept secrets, and inspire Filipinos to create their own success stories through SanGiovani-Aloe Vera of Australia's Philippine partner.

A 100 percent Filipino-owned and managed company, SanGiovani is the latest addition to the country's growing network marketing industry.

"We can help people earn money through legitimate network marketing," SanGiovani chief executive officer lawyer Eddie Tamondong said.

Aloe Vera-based juice, lotions and food supplements from Aloe Vera of Australia, Nutraceuticals from the New Jersey-based American Formulary, and Giovani Parfums from Switzerland, form SanGiovani's roster of products. While SanGiovani's array of products is of the highest quality, surprisingly, they are priced well within reach of average income consumers.

"SanGiovani is a one-stop shop offering the widest variety of superior product lines, while providing Filipinos with the opportunity to generate incomes through direct selling schemes," Tamondong said.

Offering a 100-percent retail profit to the seller for every product sold, SanGiovani is the first network marketing company in the world to combine the Unilevel and Step Ladder plans with the more innovative Binary system called Duplo. Would-be business associates may choose from 10 ways to earn much-needed cash.

Interested parties are invited to join the SanGiovani sales rally tomorrow. McDougall, Dr. De Haas, as well as SanGiovani officers will entertain questions from the participants. Raffles, free snacks, and a lot of surprises await rally attendees. As an added attraction, R&B singer Radha will regale the audience with a few songs. For more information, call the SanGiovani head office at 823-6411 to 12 or 0917-8668807, 0918-4999978 and 0922-4986316, or log on to www.sangiovani.com.

Coke 'Beat Game' wins Campaign of the Year

ONCE again Coca-Cola is enjoying the limelight with successive wins for the blockbuster 2004 campaign, Coca-Cola Beat Game.

The big idea was simple yet real: craving ice-cold Coke makes one want to get it at all costs - including playing for a lone Coke through the Coca-Cola Beat Game. So went the highly memorable, entirely sticky spots catching the entire Philippine nation by storm. The trademark chant and moves got everyone clapping, snapping and wanting to get that "aaahhh, Coca-Cola!"

Coca-Cola Beat Game greatly influenced consumption resurgence, surpassing brand health targets. It posted significant brand preference gains and vastly improved brand attribute scores. Moreover it cemented Coca-Cola's leadership position as the ultimate uplifting refreshment, precursor of trends and top youth brand firmly entrenched in Philippine pop culture.

On top of public affirmation, Coca-Cola's Beat Game continues to gain recognition by marketing and advertising professionals as well. Coke Beat Game was one of the top three finalists in the Integrated Marketing Communications category at the Coca-Cola Worldwide Marketing Excellence Awards held in Buenos Aires. And recently it also won Campaign of the Year in the Philippines' Creative Guild Ad of the Year Awards, the country's most elite advertising awards judged by the top creative directors in the country.

The Campaign of the Year is a new category, introduced to encourage bigger ideas in advertising. This category highlights the power of the big idea as it is expressed in various executions in a medium. Winning the first ever Campaign of the Year is a fitting tribute to a truly iconic brand, Coca-Cola.

Danish author's bicentenary in RP

HANS Christian Andersen, the famous Danish author of well-loved children's tales that impart the universal message of faith, love and goodness, is celebrating a worldwide bicentenary in the Philippines with a series of activities that will further endear him to Filipinos.

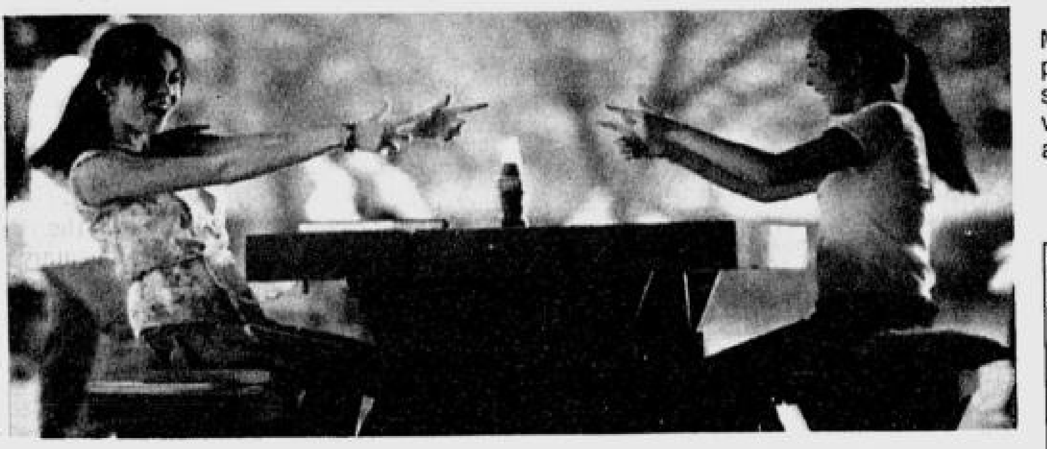
The celebration, initiated by the Hans Christian Andersen Foundation of Denmark, aims to give his readers in Denmark and abroad a more comprehensive knowledge and insight into the writer's works and the man himself.

As the Philippine contribution to the worldwide celebration, Gloria Aguinaldo Soerensen, a Filipino based in Denmark, has translated one of Hans Christian Andersen's stories "Rejsekammeraten" into Filipino titled "Ang Kaibigan sa Paglalakbay".

According to Gloria, the book is dedicated to all Filipinos living in foreign shores: "Harinawa'y pawang kabutihan lamang ang inyong matagpuan saan man kayo naroroon," she said.

The book has been developed and published by Adarna House and illustrated by Wilford Almoro.

The book launching will be held at the Bellevue Manila, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang Muntinlupa City today from 4 to 6 p.m. The event is sponsored by Harbour Centre, Vivere Suites, The Bellevue Manila, Muntinlupa City Mayor Jaime Fresnedi and Isabela Rep. Rod Albano.



Novartis associates worldwide commits to corporate citizenship

NOVARTIS Philippines sponsored a fun-filled children's party for the children of Hospicio de San Jose and did voluntary work of repainting the girls' dormitory.

Close to 40 Novartis associates in the Philippines participated in the annual "Community Partnership Day" focused on the less fortunate children and orphans of the Hospicio de San Jose. The Community Partnership Day, a global initiative of Novartis, is based on engaging activities and volunteer activities to benefit local communities. Held every year to mark the month in which Novartis was founded in 1997, Community Partnership Day reflects the commitment of Novartis associates to corporate citizenship.

This year, the event was held at Hospicio de San Jose, which is home to more than 300 people of varied age and needs from cradle to twilight years. Two-thirds of the population, abandoned by their families, seeks temporary or permanent shelter.

Novartis associates, led by its president and CEO German Peruyero, and several company directors and business unit heads, sponsored a three-hour children's party complete with magic and yoyo shows for almost 50 children of the institution. The associates danced, sang and played along with children throughout the morning's fun-filled event. The room was creatively decorated with "Under the Sea" theme balloons, while the children and guests were treated with ice cream and face-tattooing by face painting artists. All of these surprises brought fun and smiles on the faces of the children and associates. Before the end of the program, the kids rendered a special song number entitled "Pasasalamat" to express their gratitude to Novartis. As a souvenir, each child was given school bags containing art and school supplies for the June class opening.

According to a social worker from the institution, this was one of the best activities they had in Hospicio as the children had lots of fun, smiles in their faces during and after the event. Common comments were "we like the magic and yoyo show," as they added they looked forward to the next Novartis event in their institution.

Still part of the community service in Hospicio de San Jose, the associates volunteered in repainting one of the girls' dormitory walls to brighten the color of their room.

"As we celebrate our foundation day, we would like to give something back to the community in whatever way we can," said Peruyero.

In recent years, the Community Partnership day has been observed in activities like environmental protection and the Gawad Kalinga housing project.

ProductFILES

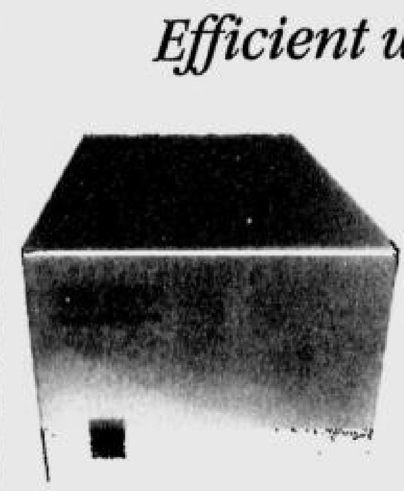
Thule load carrier is Fortuner gear

THE COUNTRY'S hottest selling SUV just got hotter with Thule's load carrier system. Made from tough and highly resistant material, Thule Roof Box Systems from Sweden maximizes the loading capacity of your vehicle, whether it's an MPV, SUV or AUV.

Thule's line of aerodynamic loading systems helps secure your personal belongings by acting as a protective shell. It also offers you the convenience of a portable baggage compartment. Its easy-on and easy-off feature makes it the practical gear to expand the capabilities of your vehicle. Shown is the Toyota Fortuner equipped with a Thule X1 Box System.

This OEM product is exclusively imported and distributed by Thule/EGR Philippines. All Thule/EGR products come with a full warranty and is the only load carrier system being sold in the country certified by the Ford Q1, QS9000, German DIN 75302 and Environmental Certificate ISO 14001. Thule is also available as a dealer option for Toyota dealers in Pasong Tamo, Makati, Toyota Ortigas and in select Nissan dealers in Metro Manila. For inquiries about how to maximize and protect your investment, log on to www.thule.com or visit the Toyota dealership at Pasong Tamo, Makati and the Thule/EGR showroom at the Equitable Bank Building, Ortigas corner Roosevelt Streets, Greenhills, San Juan or call 744-6367.

Efficient water 'ozonator' at low cost



THE OZONE infusion system of the Electromex water "ozonator" effectively stops algae, fungus and bacteria formation. It also eliminates the need for water to be chemically treated, and is environmentally safe. An "ozonator" eliminates odors and removes discoloration in all types of poorly circulated water systems. It also destroys harmful pathogens from various organic and inorganic compounds without harmful byproducts.

One unit of the Electromex water "ozonator" can treat up to 10,000 liters of water, with no maintenance of the system required except cleaning and calibration every six months. It can treat up to 10 cubic meters of water every hour, with "ozonated" air discharge at up to 3 psi with 25 grams of ozone per hour with pure oxygen. The unit, furthermore, plugs easily into a 13-amp socket or power supply.

Ozone kills bacteria 3,000 times faster than chlorine. To find out how "ozonation" provides solutions to water and air pollution, and its money-back guarantee, call Electromex Inc at 531-6782 or 535-9069. Free demo and delivery is offered for Metro Manila customers.

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1.2 M NR MAKATI/ ORTIGAS
10T/mo or 4 yrs 0% Int
10% DP Move-In 2-4 BR
Bank & Pag-Ibig Ok 0920-6348545

1.3M C5 Nr The Fort
12T/mo. or 4Yrs. No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 2-4BR 15mln Fr Mktl 0917-8169849

1.3M RESORT-TYPE nr Mktl 2-4BR 12T/mo or No DP or 0% 1st Class • Bess 0917-5234223

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P20,000 / MONTH
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867-8861 • 0917-8007452

Makati RFO CONDO BNEW
Sale/ Rent 09176206516

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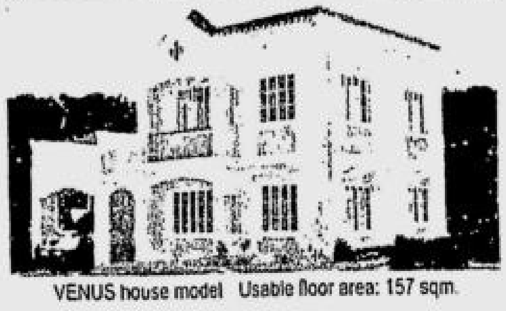
5242760/09178248178Edwin

Oriental Gardens Makati 45.5m² 2.7&up Roselyn 0920-3843962

MANILA

Pre-Sell Roxas Blvd 2007 No DP 40K/mo. or 20%DP 23K/mo. 0920-9602940 Bay Garden

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE



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Overhead Water Tank,
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LA: 64 -70 sqm
GFA: 157 sqm. approx
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MANILA

L. MENCIAS NR. P. GUEVARRA BnewTwnhse/3sty/3br/3-4tb/mdsrm/1-2grge P3.645M Tel 8903461

SAN ANDRES MANILA
Townhse/3sty/3br/3tb/ P3.860M Tel 8903461 loc 34

QUEZON CITY

Cubao P1.5M 10%DP 9126976

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NEAR AYALA HTS UP ATNEO
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LOT

LAS PINAS

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MANILA

Good for Comml,Indl 21T/sqm 270M neg. 0927-2698179 Randy

PARAHAQUE

100,230m² In-Hse Financing nr Rodriguez St. Moonwalk 0920-654-0954

QUEZON CITY

GRAND VILLAS Top Row w/view back ATENEO LOTS hse & lots avble 426-5650 929-1832 • 0919-8212235

LOT

OTHER AREAS

TAGAYTAY W/ VIEW
500 sqm. T-8896475 ; 4796

OTHER PROVINCIAL

1383m² BACOLOD 1300/m² TITLED 09196316947/5756845

LAGUNA

27lmf. In-Hse Financing Southpeak1, San Pedro. Bonus FREE Internet Bz.: 0920-654-0954

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Mamplasan, Binan, Laguna LA176sqm P500K + Asmo. Balnce (thru pag-ibig or bank loan) or cash. DBO. 0917-8997547 Jona

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FULLY OPERATING POULTRY PIGGERY IN TERESA RIZAL CALL 5339225 OR 5323291

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237 sqm 3BDR 1MDRM 4car grge up&dwn 25T/mo 2Md Dep 1Mos Advance 10T #25 Makaturing St. Conorado Subd Mnda Call 5317229 5325718

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PASIG

Karangalan nr Sta Lucia Mall 60sqm P4500 / mo 6464120

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Very Peaceful Community

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HOUSE

RIZAL

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MANILA

NR LASALLE 3BR 2TB 8992148

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MANDALUYONG

Twhse 2BR TB 0917-6231352

APARTMENT

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MANDALUYONG

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QUEZON CITY

2BR / 1TB / PARKNG P10.5T 29E Kamias Tel# 921-8430

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Mkti nr Ayala P1T Ldy 8974697

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PTAMO nr BUENDIA 1st class 38/148/185m² 8903461 loc. 34 or 19 ofc hrs

RESORT LEASE/ RENT

Pansol Hot Spring priv 7767507

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1.4% MONTHLY 8976644-46 LAS PINAS 8054326 / 6342 QUEZON CITY 3730239-40

BUSINESS . DOCTOR 524-3197

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

OFFICE SPACE
Sct. Morato QC, Rent to Own
Lot-106m² Sta. Cruz, Mla
634-0369 / 637-3082

MAKATI

COMML/OFFICE SPACES FOR LEASE (58m²- 627m²) 887-6003

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HONDA

2K CRV M. SILVER
• 21K MLG.• [illegible]

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF NUEVA VIZCAYA
Bayombong
-o0o-

OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL TREASURER

NOTICE OF SALE OF DELINQUENT REAL PROPERTY

By virtue of the provisions of sections 260 and 263 of RA 7160 otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, the undersigned will sell at public auction on July 26, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. at main lobby Provincial Capitol Building, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, the real property herein below specified which are hereby certified to be delinquent in the payment of real estate tax to satisfy all delinquent real property taxes, penalties, costs due thereon as of the date.

Name of Owner: California Energy Casecnan Water and Energy Co. Inc.
Location: Brgys. Abuyo and Pelaway, Alfonso Castañeda, Nueva Vizcaya

Property Desc.	Location	Tax Dec. No. 2000-06	Unpaid Tax (Basic & SEF)	Penalties (Discount)	2% Adm Cost	Total
Dam	Abuyo	-002-0280	63,274,927.80	20,247,976.90	1,670,458.09	85,193,362.79
Dam	Pelaway	-006-0033	103,290,169.20	33,052,854.14	2,726,860.14	139,069,883.81
Machinery	Pelaway	-006-0034	19,291,402.20	6,173,248.70	509,293.02	25,973,943.92
Building	Pelaway	-006-0035	217,008.00	69,442.56	5,729.01	292,179.57
Building	Pelaway	-006-0036	99,930.60	31,977.79	2,638.17	134,546.56
Building	Pelaway	-006-0037	10,519.80	3,366.34	277.72	14,163.86
Building	Pelaway	-006-0038	5,533.20	1,770.62	146.08	7,449.90
Building	Pelaway	-006-0039	931.80	298.18	24.60	1,254.58
Building	Pelaway	-006-0040	10,711.20	3,427.58	282.78	14,421.56
Building	Pelaway	-006-0041	5,508.60	1,762.75	145.43	7,416.78
Building	Pelaway	-006-0042	5,533.20	1,770.62	146.08	7,449.90
Building	Pelaway	-006-0043	6,433.80	2,058.82	169.85	8,662.47
Building	Pelaway	-006-0044	1,474.80	471.94	38.93	1,985.67
Building	Pelaway	-006-0045	5,634.00	1,802.88	148.74	7,585.62
Total Amount			186,225,718.20	59,592,229.82	4,916,358.96	250,734,306.98

We hereby certify that pursuant to Section 258 of RA 7160 otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, the foregoing statement of delinquencies is a correct transcript of the records of this office as of July 26, 2005.

Note: Prospective bidders on the Public Auction Sale should bid on all of the properties and are required to post Performance Bond of Php 10,000.00.

CORAZON M. SUMAWANG
Municipal Treasurer, A. Castañeda, Nueva Vizcaya

PERFECTO B. MARTINEZ, JR.
Provincial Treasurer

(PDI - July 1 & 8, 2005)

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Pajero Prado Surf Terrano Fargo Serena Largo Delica Elf Canter etc 7127539

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

CarsVans CoasterBus 422-9296

MARIAN CARS•VANS•BRDAL 8969956•8957247

Cheap Van 9330311;9348411

P800/L3 9136710 / 4333682

RENT-A-VAN 6424405

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3451802 DAVAO (082)2358375

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HI-ACE • STAREX
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AND ALL CAR BRANDS/TYPES
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CAR LOAN

1.5% Auto Easy 5344441

1.5% Auto Express 5221001-02

1.5% Car Loan 6560140

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0361

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

2% w/out taking car 6567685

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

2% w/out taking car 5315577

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BILLIARDS

26T New Compl Sr Impld 7767507

OTHER EQUIPMENT

DENTAL UNIT Sale 25T 531-9272

PETS

ASZOO
DOG TRAINING 455-6212

PHIL. DOG SCHOOL
Call: 721-37-36

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The best choice of strategy partner
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We offer attractive remuneration package and career development plan and more work opportunities for talent.

- **Administrative Assistant**
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  Good communication skill
- **Network Control Engineer**
  College or University graduate
  PC device trouble shooting ability
  Network equipments maintenance knowledge required
  Familiar with TCP/IP
  MCSE, CCNA, RHCE License will be a plus
- **Database System Analyst**
  College or University graduate
  Hands-on good skill in SA Database access, MSSQL, MYSQL
  Candidates must be experienced with designs of computer process
  Strong analytical skill
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  College or University graduate
  Good command of English
  Basic computer operation skill required
  Experience in consumer goods in multinational company will be a plus
  Strong Sales skill
  Organized and independent worker who has a great team spirit

Interested and qualified applicants, please send up-to-date resumé in English with latest photo to e-mail: Steed@twnese.com and Copy to E-Mail: esteken@yahoo.com.tw

Address: Unit 23-B of Chatham House Condominium, Herrera corner Valero, Salcedo Village, Makati City.

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BSP•BSN•PT•MT
Any Allied Health Grads up to P45T/ Mo! 8926828

DRESSMAKER, INTERNATIONAL COOK, BEAUTICIAN, DOMESTIC HELPER, PRIVATE NURSE, TUTOR, COUPLE (DH/DRIVER) PLS. CALL OR TXT 09205916569 09206262141 4981661

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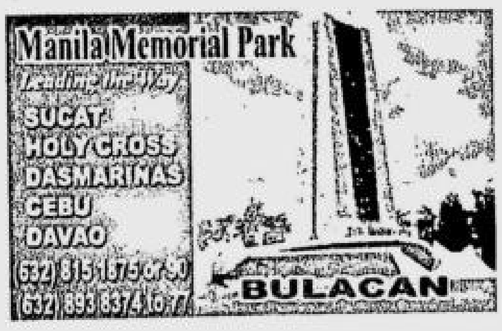
CIVIL ENGINEER
w/ or w/o exp. Pls. submit your resume @ 4208-E Ponte St., Tejeros, Mkt City or fax @ 897-3885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HOLY CROSS
DASMARIÑAS
CEBU
DAVAO
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BULACAN

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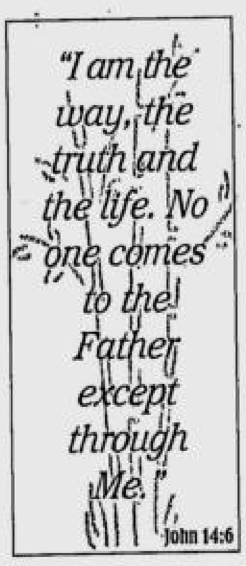
FORT BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440


"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

ELPIDIO "BOY" Q. ARZADON

Now peacefully in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 6th of July 2005.

We, his bereaved mother **Eulalia Quirolgico Arzadon**; cherished children **Louie** and **Jessica**, **Jay** (†), **Paolo**, **Carmela**, **Sophia** and **Katrina**; his grandchildren **Daniel**, **Nathan** and **Cielo**; his beloved **Susan**; his sisters and in-laws **Minda** and **Juan**, **May** and **Arthur** (†), **Nita** and **Lou**, **Nini**, **Anna** and **Syvel**, relatives and friends enjoin everyone to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His ashes are now at Chapel B-6, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City until July 13, 2005.

"I have fought the good fight
and had kept my faith...
To you O' Lord be the Glory"

ANGELO HUBAMIB NEPOMUCENO

(1945 – 2005)
of Toronto and Boac, Marinduque

died in the peace of our Lord on June 28, 2005 in Toronto, Canada.

His wife **Gracie Dayot Nepomuceno**; sister **Nilda Nepomuceno** and her husband **Cayetano Barba**, **Carlota Nepomuceno** and her husband **Benjamin Alix**; brother **Rolando** and his wife **Dr. Marilyn Averia**, **Capt. Allan Nepomuceno** and his wife **Marisa Cuenca**, **Ismael (Butch) Nepomuceno** and his wife **Gloria Franco**; in-laws **Mrs. Jovita S. Dayot**; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law **Raffy** and **Clavel**, **Baby**, **Bobby**, **Sammy** and **Delia**, **Ismael** and **Claire**, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the repose of his soul.

His remains will arrive on **July 9, 2005** and will lie in state at **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Holy Family Chapel, Doña Juana Rodriguez Ave., Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City.** Interment will be on **July 10, 2005** at the **Manila Memorial Park** after the **1:00 p.m. Mass at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church.**

In lieu of flowers, donation to the Marinducare Foundation will be greatly appreciated.

An obituary with a picture
can be a fitting tribute
to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate;
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS • DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBIT DESIGN

In Loving Memory
on the 5th Death Anniversary

GABRIEL B. ELEOSIDA
PRESENTACION B. BAUTISTA

of Batac, Ilocos Norte and Kidapawan City

Holy Masses will be offered in the following churches:

Our Lady of Mediatrix, *Kidapawan City*	6:00 a.m.
Immaculate Conception, *Vista Verde, Cainta*	6:00 a.m.
Isabella de Rocis, *Italy*	6:00 a.m.
Sanctuario de San Jose, *Greenhills*	6:00 a.m.
St. Genevieve, *Panorama City*	6:00 a.m.

For your Classified Ads requirements, call our Classifieds Advertising Hotlines:

HEAD OFFICE : 897-8808 loc. 514, 516; 899-4425; 897-2535; 897-8425 (Telefax)
CUBAO: 912-9008 to 11 (Aurora)
MAKATI : 892-5578; 811-4361; 811-4370
KALAW : 528-0213; 527-3342
MEGAMALL : 635-0219; 635-0220

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AUCTION

www.henrybutcher.com

2-DAY SALE BY PUBLIC AUCTION

AT.: LUZON AVENUE, BEZ, MARIVELES, BATAAN, PHILIPPINES
ON: WEDNESDAY 13TH & THURSDAY 14TH JULY 2005
(AND IF REQUIRED) FRIDAY 15TH JULY 2005 - 10:30AM

NOTE: THE WHOLE OR MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE PLANT ARE AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE PURCHASE PRIOR TO THE SALE DAY

COMPLETE 58 MW POWER PLANT

In over 1000 lots including: -

POWER GENERATION; BOILERS; AIR COMPRESSORS; WATER COOLING & DISTRIBUTION; TANK FARMS; TRANSFORMERS & SWITCHGEARS; MACHINE SHOP; BUILDINGS & CRANES; FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENTS; LABORATORY; LOOSE TOOLS & EQUIPMENTS; SPARE PARTS & MISCELLANEOUS

On View: Mon. 4th - Sat. 9th July & Mon. 11th & Tue. 12th July 2005
from 9:00am to 5:00pm and mornings of sale days
Refundable Deposit: Php50,000 (upon registration)
Please bring valid ID to be presented during registration

For further information please contact Maggie Calderon-Alicante at
Tel: 852 2910/11 loc. 111 Email: mags.calderon@henrybutcher.com

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E-mail: manila@henrybutcher.com

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that the Alien Certificates of Registration (ACRs) and Certificates of Residence for Pre-arranged Employment (CRPEs) of Mr. RICARDO LUIZ BOETTCHER and dependents namely: MS. MARGRID WRASSE BOETTCHER & EDUARDA WRASSE BOETTCHER with c/o address at Philip Morris Philippines, Manufacturing, Inc. 27th Floor Enterprise Center, Tower I, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Issued by the Bureau of Immigration, Manila have been lost.

(PDI–July 8, 15 & 21, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that Cad. Lot No.1519 with area of 1,011sq.m. and Covered by Declaration of Real Property no.01640,Cad Lot No. 1447 with an area of 317sq.m. and covered by Declaration Of Real Property No. 01641,Cad Lot No. 01167-B with an area of 17,527 sq.m. and covered by Declaration of Real Property 01350 and a one Third (1/3)portion of Cad Lot No.1144,1431 and 1432,Cad 285 Carmona cadastre with an area of 15,283 sq.m. and covered by Declaration of Real Property No. 01631 all of Carmona,Cavite was EXTRAJUDICIAL settled among Heirs of late ELENA MAULANIN MANGUIT per Doc. No. 34,Book No. 111 Series of 2005 of Notary Public Virgilio B. Galeon of Binan,Laguna
(PDI- July 1,8,15 2005)

Notice is given that the estate of Charles L. Corpuz who died on Dec. 26, 1987 was extra-judicially settled by his heirs per Doc. #956, Page #192, Book #X, Series 2005 Notarized by Atty. Almel S. Mngandog Mangandog of Cainta, Rizal
(PDI-July 8, 15 & 22, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that estate of late CONCEPCION RODIL MARTIRES has been adjudicated by her lone heir JORGE RODIL MARTIRES thru affidavit of self adjudication dated July 1, 2005 appearing as Doc. No.285 Page No.160 Book No.XIV Series 2005 before Notary Public Atty. Mario D. Ortiz of Cebu City.
PDI-July 8, 15 & 22, 2005

NOTICE is hereby gieven that the estate of the late ABDON A. ILAGAN has been extra-judicially settled WITH WAIVER OF SHARE among his heirs per Doc. No. 241, Page No. 50, Book No. VII, Series of 2005, before Atty. Domingo G. Losa, Notary Public, Paranaque City.
(PDI-June 24, July 1 & 8, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late THELMA N. PAGTAKHAN was extrajudicially settled on June 21, 2005 per Doc. No. 878, Page No. 64, Book No. 10, Series of 2005 of Notary Public Atty. Rafael N. Aguilos of Mandaluyong City.
(PDI - June 24, July 1 & 8, 2005)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Migrating to Canada or Australia, please visit www.b4landing.com Text @ 0928-7995212

Induction of Officers

All Hope Christian Alumni Officers and Directors are invited to attend the Induction of Officers Ceremony tomorrow, Saturday, July 9, at 6 o'clock in the evening at Hope Christian High School Gymnasium at 1242 Benavidez St., Sta. Cruz, Manila.

CALL POEA

24-HOUR HOTLINES
722-1144 or 722-1155

MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.
G/F MWSI Bldg., MWSS Complex
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City, Philippines 1100
Tel. Nos. 435-33-66, 920-5521 loc. 3600, 3615, 3616

INVITATION TO BID

(Re-bidding)

Maynilad Water Services, Inc. is inviting all interested suppliers/ dealers to participate in the pre-qualification and E-bidding for the supply & delivery of the following items:

Quantity	Items/Description
64 units	Desktop Computers-Intel Caleron 2.53 Processor
12 units	Desktop Computers-Intel Pentium IV Processor
	Various Printers, UPS and AutoCAD

As per MWSI Technical Specification & E-Bid Terms and Conditions.

Interested bidders may, beginning July 7 until July 11, 2005 and upon payment of a non-refundable participation fee in the amount of P2,000.00 payable to MWSI, obtain further information and secure a complete set of pre-qualification forms and bid terms and conditions from MWSI-Purchasing Department, Basement, MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City (Tel. No. 435-33-66 or 435-33-74). Payment can be made in form of Cash or Manager's Check addressed to Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (MWSI).

Deadline for the submission of accomplished pre-qualification documents and financial proposal is on July 12, 2005; 10:00 AM, at the above stated address.

MWSI reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any and all informalities therein and accept the bid it deemed most advantageous to the company.

(Sgd.) LUIS Z. LERMA
Manager, Purchasing Dept.

(PDI – July 8 & 9, 2005)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Philippines MCPO Box 2102 Tel. No. 893-6001/1320

PNOC
The Energy Company

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) and classified, at least, as Category B/AC Medium, Sub-Category A, Specialty in Electrical Works or General Building - Building & Industrial Plant to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

Supply, Delivery, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of the Negros Oriental Expanded Rural Electrification Project, Stage VIII - Schedule 2 (8 Brgys.)
(EDC 05-108)

The Approved Budget is PhP5,034,292.01 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is One Hundred Fifty (150) calendar days.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o M.S. Magdamit) starting **June 28, 2005** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Two Hundred (PhP200.00).

Application for Eligibility and Letter of Intent must be submitted to the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group not later than 3:00 p.m. of **July 14, 2005** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

Bid documents will be available for issuance to eligible bidders starting **August 1, 2005** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: One Thousand Five Hundred (PhP1,500.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **August 25, 2005, 10:00 a.m.** at the Pre-bid Room, 1st Floor Building 5, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila.

Sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor, Building 5, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila, not later than **2:00 p.m. of September 13, 2005** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

Note: PNOC-EDC Cashier transactions are from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 nn and 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. only.

BAC Chairman

(PDI – July 8, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF AMENDMENT

The Announcement of Bidding for the supply of 185,000 MT long grain white rice published in this newspaper July 7, 2005 amends the Announcement of Bidding posted here last June 25, 2005.

(PDI – July 8, 2005)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PD Ref No. PB050428-EL0043

The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE FOR HEAD OFFICE**, wishes to invite interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid on the items listed below:

1 LOT – DESIGN, SUPPLY, DELIVERY TO SITES, INSTALLATION, INTEGRATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF MICROWAVE SYSTEM FOR MINDANAO

TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET FOR CONTRACT TO BE BID : P 19,500,000.00

1. Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting **July 7, 2005 to August 18, 2005** at the BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00)** per set.
2. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before **2:00 P.M. of August 19, 2005** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date is declare non-working day, the new deadline for submission shall be announced through a Bid Bulletin. Submission of documents must be clear, legible and readable. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
3. Site Survey shall be on **July 25-29, 2005.**
4. Pre-bid conference will be held on **August 5, 2005 at 2:00 P.M.** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
5. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
6. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
7. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – July 8 & 14, 2005)

ERRATUM

In the ad of PNOC Energy Development Corporation re: Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid published in this newspaper last Wednesday, July 6, 2005, the phrase "... and shall be opened immediately thereafter" in the fourth paragraph should have read "...and shall be *publicly* opened immediately thereafter."

Our Apologies.

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sunday INQUIRER magazine GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE

You'll never know what to expect once you enter the forest trail. Crackling leaves underfoot and birds in glorious chorus overhead – it is just enchanting.

Think of it as an eco-adventure in your own backyard. Just a few minutes from home is a journey waiting to begin. Enjoy hours of exploring trails and discovering a variety of plants and vines that twist and coil along the winding paths. Chase elusive dragonflies and colorful butterflies.

If you're up for a more active afternoon with the kids, fly through the forest on ziplines or test your endurance on the ropes courses. Explore deep into the forest on your mountain bikes.

In the heart of this enviable, exclusive leisure community is the Anvaya Cove Beach and Nature Club — a members-only gathering place amidst spectacular lagoon landscaping — for wining, dining and unwinding. Where the recreational amenities provide opportunities for bonding and unique experiences that all family members can share.

Own a slice of paradise and dare to live the life you've always wanted. Your exclusive membership in the Beach and Nature Club offers you options to extend this experience. Select a residential lot where you can build your dream vacation home. Or own one of a number of luxurious seaside villas located a short walk away from the main beach.

In your search for the ideal second home, there is absolutely no leisure community in the country that is as warm and inviting for your family as Anvaya Cove.

By Ayala Land, naturally.

It's a family affair.

ANVAYA COVE
An AYALA Leisure Community

A joint development project of

AYALA LAND, INC. SUDECO

Call: (632) 728-7000 / E-mail: anvayacove@ayalaland.com.ph / Visit: www.anvayacove.com

The particulars, details and visuals shown herein are intended to give a general idea of the project and as such are not to be relied upon as statements of fact. While such particulars and details are based on present plans which have been prepared with utmost care and given in good faith, buyers are invited to verify their factual correctness and subsequent changes, if any. The contents herein are subject to change without prior notice and do not constitute part of an offer or contract. HLURB License to Sell No. 12469. SEC Registration Order No. 067, Series of 2005.

BUSINESS *Friday*

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Humor could be your best-selling tool

By Karen V. De Asis
Contributor

"I'VE seen more humor back in advertising. Maybe we're allowed to be a little lighter, which I think is a happy return from a few years ago when you felt guilty if you laughed," stated John Hunt, film jury president during the recently concluded Cannes 25th year International Ad Festival held in Cannes, France.

Similarly in the Philippines, the 2004 Creative Guild Awards counted among its winning roster a number of brands that used a liberal dose of fun and humor in its creative executions. Among them were Ad of the Year Coca Cola Beat commercials, Fita biscuit, Biolink soap, Immodium, Skyflakes and the McDonald's French fries promo.

Ironically, for many years the use of humor in marketing and advertising has been a constant source of debate among practitioners. Non-believers maintain that the use of humor in marketing communications is no guarantee of a brand's success. Among the reasons cited are: humor as distracting while often leading to many cases of the brand and its name losing itself in the joke; humor as relative and culturally or gender sensitive; and humor being appropriate only to certain product categories.

On the other hand, advocates of humor argue that it helps the brand rise above the clutter; generates a favorable, positive impression; gets people to talk; and in many cases even create a bond with the brand.

Capitalizing on humor

When does a marketer use humor as a pivotal strategy in building brands? Below are some situations that lend to fun and humor as a marketing and creative strategy.

Parity products. When a brand is a mere parity to other products or services in the same category, humor generally creates consumer awareness, aids in memory recall and retention.

Low cognition products or services. Use of humor is often more effective among brands that have very little or effortless consumer processing of information around the product or service. For example, some convenience goods need not rely on strong advertising claims and reason to persuade consumers to try or use the product. Brands belonging to categories where benefits need to be presented in detail as part of a persuasive argument may opt for a more serious rather than humorous execution. Notwithstanding, the use of humor in marketing communications even for serious categories may be explored but must be copy tested to determine its acceptability among targeted consumers.

Use emotive appeal to re-energize mature brands. Humor helps generate positive feelings of interest and fun, further enhancing strong brands or creating a turnaround for mature brands in trouble.

Targeting age-specific segments. Older, mature consumers due largely to their age and life experiences have adopted a more comedic view of life. Clever word play, absurd humor, even witty satire are some of the ways that humor can be used to get the interest of older audiences.

However, a string of no-nos would be sarcastic, put-down, cruel types of humor.

Using humor effectively

Not a few brands worked their way to success while using fun and humor in their advertising and marketing activities. Among them are Joe boxer underwear, Bud Light, Wendy's, Budweiser, Jack In The Box fast food, Southwest Airlines, etc.

Integrating humor

Below are some of the ways by which these brands have wisely integrated humor in their brand-building efforts:

Humor is strongly linked to the brand's value proposition. Anheuser Busch's Bud Light Real Men of Genius long-running campaign and insightful, humorous and witty creative treatment is a testament to the fresh, real, smooth taste of Bud Light.

Humor is a mere device to catch the target audience's attention. While the target market's attention is hooked, the marketer drives the point he needs to make. Wendy's strong brand awareness happened with the airing of the Where's The Beef? Advertising. The classic Fluffy Bun commercial opens with three old ladies looking at a huge, fluffy bun they get at a regular fast-food restaurant. One of the ladies suddenly asks what all three have been thinking all along, "Where's the beef?" cueing the smooth transition into the product presentation.

Humor is a means to project a maverick, yet fun, spirited, dynamic brand personality. Joe Boxer, a brand of underwear and sleepwear popular among the 15- to 30-year-old Americans, role models this personality. Its marketing mantra is to "think locally, laugh globally." Joe Boxer combines laughter in all its marketing efforts along with "creativity and individuality in everything it does including providing customers with product designs that are unique, imaginative and innovative."

Use of humor is restricted to situations and not meant to ridicule, put down individuals. Likewise, successful humor brands have avoided highly offensive communications.

Know the audience profile. Marketers must assess its audience profile well. Consumers have different levels of comprehension and cognitive processing capabilities. The use of humor must be suitable to the target market profile.

Humor can be a powerful device to generate awareness and recall when used well. It does the opposite and can even be detrimental sometimes leading to the brand's failure when used inappropriately and irresponsibly.

The writer is a professor of Marketing Management and Brand Management at the De La Salle Professional Schools Graduate School of Business with email address at kdeasis@skyinet.net.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Friday, July 8, 200-

HOLLYWOOD DREAM
Hosted by Eric Quizon

THE DREAM BEGINS JULY 17! The much-talked-about reality show "Hollywood Dream" will finally begin! Find out who will get a chance to fly to New York and Los Angeles, meet Hollywood producers and casting directors, get a Screen Actors Guild card, appear on "As the World Turns" and land a role in 2 movies being produced in Hollywood!

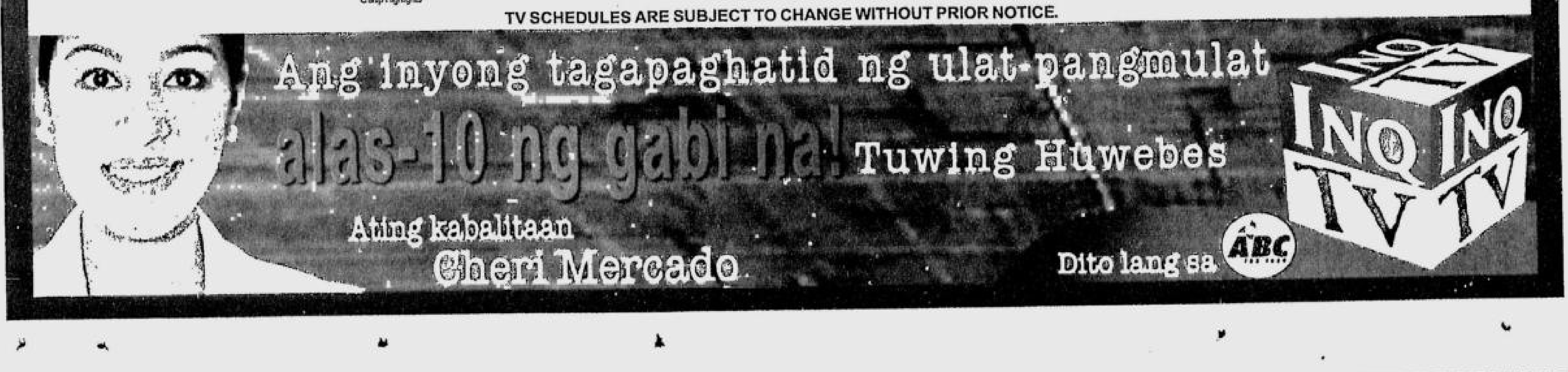
SUNDAY 9:00 PM

ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Showbiz No. 1	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Qpids	TV Patrol World		Meteor Garden Full Edition	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Kampanerang Kuba	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Oh! Feel Young	24			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	Mutya 6/10: The Real Story		ESPN Golf	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	Tenjho Tenge	Shaman King	Flame Of Recca	Full House	24 Oras		Dama		Encantadia	Extra Challenge		Attic Cat	Bubble Gang			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Krusada Kontra Kamen		The Insider	NBA On RPN					The OC		Newswatch Now	Tough Crowd		
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		Shakey's V-League				TM Phil 9-Ball			IBC News Tonite	GMA The Working President	
JackTV	The Sib Show	Samurai Jack	The Batman	WWE Smackdown				Sweat	Just For Laughs	Mad TV		Joe Schmo Show		WWE. ECW. One Night Stand				Worst Case Scenario	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX	MYX Firsts	Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	My MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Club MYX	Star MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Simple Life	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Arrested Development	Significant Others	Joan Of Arcadia		Average Joe		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		My Funny Valentine				Monika				War Freak				Mistah				Ghost	
Studio 23						X-Men Evolution	Spiderman	The Batman	Justice League	Wazzup Wazzup		Barkada Nights				News Central	Oprah		Just Shoot Me
AXN								The Associates		Alias (Season III)			E Buzz	Andromeda (Season IV)					
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	TNA Wrestling		Stupid Behavior Caught On Tape	Weird TV	Angel		Friends	Stupid Behavior Caught On Tape
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		Your World Today	
National Geographic		Pharaoh's Mask		Battle Of The X-Planes				Wildlife Detectives	Insects From Hell	Wow		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Day Of The Jackal		Wild Dogs Biting Back	
Solar Sports			TV Shopping	Sudirman Cup SF 05				Greatest Classics					Sports Desk	2005 Fivb World Grand Prix				NBA Inside Stuff	GWS
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Ming's Quest	Revealed With Jules Asner		It's Good To Be	Life & Style		Guess Who's Coming To Decorate		Alias	
HBO	Phantom Force (2:20 PM)			The Spitfire Grill (3:50 PM)				Wilder Days (5:50 PM)			Dead Calm (7:25 PM)			Cat In The Hat			2 Fast 2 Furious (10:23PM)		
Star Movies		Opening Night (3:15 PM)	The Eliminator (3:45 PM)				The In-Laws (5:20 PM)			The Recruit				Wrong Turn			Psycho (10:25PM)		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Static Shock	Justice League Unlimited	The Batman	Zoids Fusors	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Courage The Cowardly Dog	Time Squad	Thundercats	Justice League Unlimited	The Batman
ESPN				Tour De France 2005	2005 Kaohsiung World Pool Championship							Sportscenter Asia	2005 Kaohsiung World Pool Championship						
Disney Channel	Mr Bean The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Moms On Strike			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Muppet Treasure Island	
Cinemax		Till Proven Innocent				Beverly Hills Cop			Hook (6:45 PM)					Hollywood Homicide				Body Double (10:55PM)	
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Judging Amy		HCA The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	The Nanny	Sue Thomas: FB Eye		Judging Amy		Five Days To Midnight			Wife Swap (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas: FB Eye
Discovery Channel		Power Zone				Wild Discovery		Stormproof: Saving Our Crumbling Coastlines		Monster Garage		American Chopper		Wolf Battlefields		Extraordinary Experiences: We Built This City: London		Crime Night	
MTV Philippines			Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Get Spotted		MTV Classic (Vol 2)		(TVNN: They Wanted A Famous Face	MTV Divas		Newlyweds	Wanna Come In	Faking the Video	Laguna Beach	On Board at MTV	MTV Screen	VH1 Video Collection	
Sports Plus				Bank of America C'ship Highlights		Strongman		Golf Hawaii 2004	World's Greatest Auto Shows		Tour De France	Monster Jam		FMX		Tour De France	Inside the PGA	Cialis Western Open Highlights	

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.



The Philippines can in Cannes

By Angel Guerrero
Contributor

CANNES, in the southern part of France, along the Cote d' Azur, became the melting pot of the world's top creative minds recently.

A record number of delegates from all over the world flocked to the Cannes Advertising Festival recently. The seven-day festival showcased and awarded the best ads in the world, discussed industry issues, and hosted all-night parties on the *croisette*.

The Philippines had many first in this year's Cannes festival: first major win—the first Silver Cannes Lion winner in the festival's 52-year history by the "Bunso" TV commercial ad made by BBDO Guerrero Ortega; the first Filipino judge at Cannes with McCann Erickson Philippines chair emeritus Emily Abrera's participation; the first time Filipino clients graced Cannes; and the first time the country sent a team to take part in the Young Creatives Competition.

Here are what the Cannes Filipino delegates, mostly first-timers, say about what they got out of their participation to the world's "Oscars" of advertising.

Emily Abrera
Chair emeritus
McCann-Erickson Phils. Inc.
First Filipino jury member of Cannes

Met many creative people from different countries, saw how we are similar and different, how diverse the cultures and perceptions are, how important it is to have a balance of men and women in the jury, how to make better sense of the judging process, rules of the game , importance of production quality, etc. The work must be excellent but there is an element of luck too. That it's tough but not impossible, that pride as a country far exceeds pride as agencies.

Patricia Arches
President & CEO
McCann-Erickson Philippines

I found the Cannes experience quite inspiring. I am convinced that Pinoy creativity can compete with the best in the world. Our ideas just have to be powerful enough to overcome our local handicap in terms of production values and technology. We have the potential to win at Cannes.

Mondo Armedilla
Art director,
Publicis Manila

The world-class work I've seen is intimidating yet inspiring. The quality of work and the eye to see beyond tri-media are what I believe Philippine advertising can achieve. This can be done if everyone involved is focused to meet world-class standards. Having an idea is important but how you say it makes a big difference.

Benjamin Berdin Jr.
Art director,
JimenezBasic
RP's first representative in the Young Creatives Competition

After the Young Lions, we are now ready to go for the big ones. The weeklong Cannes exposure was like an incubator for us. Equal to a three-year working experience in an agency. Now that we know how the game is played, we will try for the gold next time.

Teeny Gonzales
VP/executive creative director
Harrison Communications

It was quite an eye-opener. I saw some really great work. At least now I know what it takes to win. Hopefully we will see more winners from the Philippines in the coming years.

David Guerrero
Chair and chief creative officer
BBDO Guerrero Ortega. Philippines first Cannes Silver Lion winner

I learned the ad industry does not have a monopoly on creative talent. And, as one speaker said, agencies have no divine right to exist. The world is moving into a new era of communications; and collaborating with those outside our industry is an essential part of our survival. We were fortunate enough to benefit from just such collaboration. You can bet we'll be doing more of it in the future for the benefit of all our clients.

Mariles Gustilo
President & CEO
Lowe Philippines

I realize that no one has the franchise to bad work. I was amazed at how much of it there is out there and even more amazed that these were entered at such a prestigious competition. Better yet, no one has the franchise to great work either. Going to Cannes made me realize that we Filipinos, at our best, have what it takes to make it in Cannes. It brought to fore a shared sense of national pride amongst us delegates who are in fact staunch competitors here at home. With BBDO winning the country's first ever Silver Lions and with Lowe, Saatchi, Burnett and TBWA contributing their share of finalists this year, there is no doubt in my mind that one day soon the Philippine flag will find its rightful place at center stage in the Palais des Festival.

C.J. Jimenez
Copywriter
JimenezBasic, Philippines
First representative in the Young Creatives Competition

I learned that because our local ad industry has been quite insular, we have been missing a larger stage where we can excel and shine. That is what Cannes is to me. A bigger stage to showcase Pinoy talent. Hopefully my own in a few years.

Pauline Lao
Country media manager
Procter &Gamble Philippines

Lots of inspiration, lots of energy, lots of determination to change marketing for the better. Lots of laughter and lots of work. I have been away so long.

Joel Limchoc
Head of art
BBDO Guerrero Ortega

Most of the winning ads have great ideas that are deep in insights. Insights that are very universal especially to the multi-racial juries. There are also a big number of ads that teach values like the Honda Grr and the AID awareness commercial from TBWA Paris.

Melvin Mangada
Executive creative director
TBWA Santiago Mangada Puno

Proper representation in the jury would certainly help push our chances in winning metals. The jury head for radio admitted to us that a lot of work got lost in translation. There were a few pieces that were initially eliminated but brought back for reconsideration, thanks to jury members who explained the local nuances to the rest of judges. There is still a great deal of work to be done if we want to move from the perennial finalist status to that of a consistent metal winner. We have to clean up our ideas some more and keep on polishing our craft.

Felipe Olarte
VP for advertising
Philippine Daily Inquirer

It is a great experience meeting creative gurus around the world as well as representatives of leading publications worldwide. Our presence in the Cannes ad festival affirms the number one position of the INQUIRER in the Philippines.

Raoul Panes
Creative director
BBDO Guerrero Ortega

Cannes was inspiring. Came out thinking we can win. Start with a great insight then do our creatives differently than the rest of the world. Mimicking the West won't cut it. Of course, some luck helps! Saw some bad ads win. The decline of traditional media is also evident. That's why great ideas rule. It is a smaller world now with a short attention span.

Roger Pe
Executive creative director
DDB Manila

Going to Cannes is like going to the Olympics. You don't just fly there and expect to win. We must be ready for its standards. Entries in Cannes are winners in their own regional shows so you could imagine the force we are contending with. Unoriginal ads have no place in Cannes and creativity in the world continues to evolve. It is good to come here to benchmark where we are now and how we are doing. Sadly we are far behind.

Frances Posa Ramos
Creative group head
Lowe Philippines

It was pretty overwhelming but very inspiring. Being exposed to good creative work makes you raise your own standards and make you want to do better work.

Renato Reinoso
SVP for sales & marketing
Philippine Daily Inquirer

A great experience to be exposed to the global arena where you meet the world's best advertising creative talents and their excellent works. The Philippines' drive to win a prestigious Cannes Lion award must continue because we are equally talented and can be competitive with the world's best given the proper motivation and global exposure.

Jimmy Santiago
Managing partner
TBWA Santiago Mangada Puno

I was prepared to be awed by first-world brilliance coming to Cannes but, honestly after seeing the short list, I felt we could really make it this time and end up with a Lion. The work of Europe and Latin America were a real standout not because of bigger ideas than the Philippine entries; just bolder, glossier in executions. The business sessions were most impressive because of substance and precision in presentation. This Cannes, being a milestone for the country and for BBDO Guerrero Ortega. Never mind the heat and the hefty cost of participation. This marks the beginning of our understanding of how to hunt a Lion.

Tanke Tankeko
Creative director
TBWA Santiago Mangada Puno

Inspired by Brazil's medal haul, an affirmation that first world countries do not have a monopoly of the festivals. Challenged after having the honor of being exposed to the global creative portfolio. Optimistic that Cannes will see more Filipino winning creative work. BBDO's silver win proves that Filipinos can in Cannes. But most of all, I felt proud how the Filipino delegates looked after one another and openly shared insights, musings, learnings there. It makes me feel hopeful that we are shedding certain local mentalities that keep us from being great. And am a little bit eager to get my lion's share.

Jun Vivar
Vice president
United Laboratories

With media clutter and fragmentation, the consumer battle will be won not by rating points but by the equality of the creative idea and its integration with the brand.

Macromedia advances e-learning with Breeze 5

MACROMEDIA Inc., top provider of software that aids design, delivery, and display of websites and Internet applications, announced the immediate availability of a major new release of Macromedia Breeze that delivers high-impact online conferencing and collaborative Web communications everyone can access instantly.

Breeze 5 harnesses the ubiquity of Macromedia Flash Player with more than 500 million Internet users who can instantly enter an online meeting or access rich, on-demand presentations without the frustrating experiences and painful downloads associated with other Web communication systems.

Macromedia Breeze 5 now has everything organizations need to fully realize the benefits of accelerated and more effective training, marketing, selling and enterprise conferencing. The integrated solution provides both real-time online meetings and on-demand presentations and e-learning courses which audiences can see and hear anytime, anywhere through standard Web browsers.

E-Learning and Web conferencing technology embodies a huge opportunity for business, government and education professionals to extend the reach of their efforts while significantly reducing costs. Through such technology, individuals can host online events, generate leads, cross share ideas and technology, and most importantly communicate with customers, prospects, students, employees, or partners, whenever and wherever.

Realizing the potential of e-learning and Web conferencing in the Philippines, senior e-learning consultant from Macromedia South Asia, Talwinder Singh Min, has recently conducted a product demonstration on Breeze to targeted businesses which was attended by representatives from the human resource, marketing and communications divisions.

Around the globe, Breeze users include businesses belonging to diverse industries such as Sun Microsystems, Siemens, Philips, Canon and BMW. In the Philippines, Macromedia eyes telecoms and banking industries as well as call centers for its rapid employee training. Macromedia Breeze is likewise embraced by schools and learning institutions in Asia including the Philippines' Systems Technology Institute (STI).

Featuring a simple and intuitive user interface, Macromedia Breeze 5 provides online communications that are easy to access with the ubiquitous Macromedia Flash Player and rival the effectiveness of in-person meetings. Even first-time users can instantly realize the incredible value of Web communications by avoiding the expense of travel and communicating more effectively. Breeze 5 now takes the lead with market-leading features that include voice over IP, on-demand video, and real-time, multipoint video conferencing.

Macromedia Breeze consists of three core Breeze platform and modules which provide specific application functionality which can be deployed with either some or all components.

Marketing guru answers burning questions

BUSINESSES these days are faced with tough challenges that need to be addressed in order to be at par with their competitors. More often than not, the area of concern involves questions in the field of marketing which must be dealt with the soonest time possible to create an effective image for the company.

"Companies should equip themselves with the right marketing strategies to ensure success for their business," says Dr. Ned Roberto, a most-sought-after marketing consultant, speaker, international author, and educator. "They should be able to learn the 'tricks of the trade,' that is, getting themselves involved in every aspect of marketing in order to make a good name for the company's services or products."

Roberto lists down some of the burning questions on marketing that concern companies nowadays:

- Market segmentation and market opportunity search problems:

What's the best way to do market segmentation for banks?

Are the poor a market to consider versus say, the middle class?

How can a branded market leader fight the entry of generics?

- Product positioning problems:

How can I make consumers switch and be loyal to my brand?

How should I manage my brand positioning?

ROBERTO

- Advertising and promo problems:

How do we ensure the success of our ad campaign?

Is it worth using a celebrity as ad endorser?

- Sales and distribution problems:

What can we do with a weak distributor we can't fire?

What should we practice: uniform or customized discounts for our customers?

- Pricing problems:

Is there such a thing as painless price increases for consumers?

In native handbag exporting, how do we compute our price to be competitive in the international market?

Should our premium brand lower its price to answer the threat of low-priced competitors?

How do we compete against cheap parallel imports?

- Problems in organizing and implementing marketing:

How do we stop other departments for torpedoing marketing?

How do I get marketing and sales to work in synch?

- Problems in marketing metrics and control:

What's the market size of my market segment and the market share of brands in it?

How much do these market size and share data matter to small business entrepreneurs?

How should marketing be accountable for results?

Roberto will answer these questions as he speaks about the right marketing solutions to business problems at the Marketing Solutions Forum set on July 11, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

The seminar is based on the popular Philippine Daily Inquirer column "MarketingRX," which answers and gives prescriptions and solutions to burning marketing questions and problems. Roberto co-writes the column with his son, Ardy Roberto, chief education officer of Salt & Light Ventures.

Roberto has consulted and conducted in-house seminars for Fortune 500 companies in the US, Europe and Asia such as Unilever, Citibank, Pfizer, McCann-Erickson, Nestlé, AC Nielsen, among others. He is also the founder and chairman of Market Research Solutions Inc., a new generation market research company.

He has also taught for De La Salle University-Manila, Kellogg Business School, Northwestern University (Kellogg Business School) in Evanston, Chicago and for INSEAD in France. He was likewise a professor of international marketing at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) until his retirement from the institute in 2004.

In 1983, Roberto received the Philippine Marketing Association's Agora Award for Marketing Education, and last year, was the first recipient of Lifetime Achievement in Marketing Education.

He has written seven books, including the first and second editions of "Social Marketing," co-authored with Philip Kotler and Nancy Lee. His three other books all published in 2002 are trade best-sellers, including "Strategic Market Segmentation: How to Market to the Rich," "The Middle Class and the Masa," "Marketer's Guide to Socio-Economic Classification of Consumers" and "How To Make Local Governance Work." He is currently working on a new book with Philip Kotler to be published in October by John Wiley & Sons (New York).

Roberto holds an MBA and PhD in Marketing at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Business.

For inquiries, call 813-2732 / 813-2703 / 830-2191, or email drned@inspire.ph.

Experts gather for a 'green' discussion

By Chupsie Medina
Contributor

WHEN more than 300 advocates of Philippine forestry get together, expect nothing but "green" discussions. In the recently concluded Philippine Forestry Development Forum held at the Asian Development Bank, all delegates agreed that nothing short of immediate action was needed to stave off further degradation of the country's forest cover.

Not long after ADB Southeast Asia Dept. Director General Shamshod Akhtar welcomed everyone in the packed hall, the two-day meet went into high gear with spirited discussions on how to restore the health of the country's primary and secondary forests. Sustainable forest management (SFM) became everyone's battlecry.

Forest guardians—including Sen. Pia Cayetano, who chairs the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, Fr. Peter Walpole of the Environmental Science for Social Change, lawyer Antonio Oposa Jr. of Nature Foundation, Anita Celdran of Sustainable Project Management and artist-environmentalist Odette Alcantara among several foreign and local NGO delegates—kept an eagle-eye on the proceedings. These kept the government, the business sector, and even such venerable institutions as the University of the Philippines, the ADB, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), and even the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on their toes throughout the discussions.

The forum itself was a revelation by giving better clarity to the concept of sustainable forestry management in both the local and global contexts. The messages of Executive Secretary Eduardo R. Ermita on behalf of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Sec. Michael Defensor of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources set the tone for a freewheeling dialogue among participants. Agusan Rep. Leovigildo Banaag assured the stakeholders that the wheels were moving in the House toward the passage of a forestry law more attuned to the challenges of the 21st century.

Found together at the VIP tables were former DENR Secretaries Fulgencio Factoran Jr., Heherson Alvarez, Elisa Gozun, Angel Alcala, Victor Ramos, Ricardo Umali and Congressman Antonio Cerilles. More than just a forum coup, this was a benevolent sign that the country's forestry agenda can move forward in the spirit of harmony and scientific objectivity.

The well-respected Dr. Manoel Sobral Filho of ITTO clarified the issues confronting the world's timber trade and the role that foresters have in keeping it sustainable. Members of the private sector saw this as a sign of good long-term prospects for the export and import of wood and wood products.

FOOD and Agriculture Organization's Patrick Durst (left) with International Tropical Timber Organization Manoel Sobral Filho.

Meneleo Carlos Jr. of the Federation of Philippine Industries, Nicolaas K. de Lange of the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines, and Antonio Olizon of the Philippine Wood Producers Association were reassuring in their observations and views on responsible use of forest products. "We all have a stake in the future of our forests," Olizon noted.

And of course, our foresters—led by former DENR Sec. Umali, president of the Society of Filipino Foresters, Inc. and former DENR Usec. Rene de Rueda—shared their enthusiasm and pride over many of the sector's breakthroughs. After all, our foresters have provided the expertise that have made SFM showcases of various leased forest areas under the stewardship of companies and communities.

From the northern hinterlands of the Sierra Madre to the southern swamplands of Mindanao, the forestry landscape shows signs of promise. Umali, presenting the world-acclaimed Surigao Development Corp. experience, and Antonio Avelino of Sirawai Plywood and Lumber Co. illustrated how green oases can come to life amid near-barren mountains and hillsides through both well-managed secondary forests and tree plantations.

Even the fledgling attempts of our local governments to muster their communities to guard and protect, as well as to grow back, their forests received applause. Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado, president of the League of Governors of the Philippines and Cong. Rodolfo Q. Agbayani of Nueva Vizcaya were equally congratulated by everyone after they related the valiant camaraderie of their constituents in learning and practicing community-based forestry management.

The UP Los Baños College of Forestry and Natural Resources (UPLB-CFNR) provided valuable insights in further understanding our forests. Prof. Rex Victor Cruz, Ph.D. very convincingly explained that steep slopes and excessive rainfall—not forest degradation—principally caused the Aurora and Quezon floods and landslides last December. This theme was echoed by FAO regional senior forestry officer Patrick Durst. UPLB CFNR Dean Ramon Razal also provided a credible piece on the issues surrounding the logging ban controversy, while Dr. Prescila Dolom of the UPLB's Forest Development Center presented the value of forest-based industries to sustainable development.

Finally, the forum's success would not have been attained if not for the close coordination and teamwork of the various government line agencies and their experts—Dr. Renato Solidum Jr. of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, Deputy Director General Rolando Tungpalan of the National Economic Development Authority, Dr. Florentino Tesoro of the Department of Science and Technology, and many others.

The report of DENR Head for Policy and Planning Services Dir. Romeo Acosta is a heartwarming pat on the back. Culling data from surveys and reports from the field, he stated that the battle to arrest the deterioration of Philippine forestlands has made some headway, and that increasing forest cover had been noted in a number of areas already.

Thus, when DENR Forestry Management Bureau Dir. Marcial Amaro presented a two-page draft forum resolution to Sec. Defensor on the last hour of the second day, there were cheers and applause for a job well done. The well-organized forum in fact scored a double success—it provided a roadmap for stable forestry policy and got all the major stakeholders—including some traditionally adversarial sectors—to agree that sustainable forest management is the way to go.

Why do my . . .

From page B2-4

customer segment remain that forgiving and not change toward the multiplicative mindset? When you go after new customer segments, are customers in those segments additive or are they multiplicative in their satisfaction rules about their service experience?"

We're sure you may have noticed that your case as well as the cases covered by the ethnographic studies we've cited so far relate to the market segments of Class D and Class E consumers. We continue to find the *masa* market and consumers as forgiving. They understand your limitations and do try to understand before jumping immediately to a guilty damning verdict. SUN Cellular subscribers may be a good example too. Even though SUN promises unlimited text and calls 24/7, subscribers complain about calls being dropped/cut after 15 minutes during the peak hours of 6 p.m. onwards. To make calls, you have to dial a dozen times (especially during peak hours). These subscribers complain but are forgiving. They even make an excuse for SUN, saying *"Kaunti lang naman ang kita nila. Mura kasi. Pabayaan mo na.* At least I can make calls in the morning and afternoon." (They don't make much money on us. The service is cheap, so just let it go.)

The most compelling example of how forgiving the *masa* can be is with our experience with the Marcoses and now with Erap...and who knows, with Gloria as well. The *masa* or a good proportion of them must have long forgiven Marcos and his family. In fact, the junior MRx was eating at RedCrab Greenbelt the other night and who else walks in but Imelda with her entourage! Within a few minutes people were lining up to have their pictures taken with her. Pretty soon, she was singing "Dahil Sa'yo" with the staff amidst much applause from most of the diners. In our minds, we were thinking, didn't we storm this lady's house in 1986 forcing them into exile? It was weird.

Look at Erap. There must have been practically complete forgiveness in a good proportion of the *masa* voter segment as there are now talks among this *masa* of bringing him back as PGMA's replacement should we have a snap election. (Will Filipinos now forgive PGMA after her live, almost teary eyed apology and admission to being the voice behind the "Hello Garci" tapes?)

Upper class-not as forgiving?

What we have been finding in our other ethnographic studies is that it is usually with the upper class consumers and the upscale middle class where the multiplicative rule is followed. Our students' data from interviews with Business Class airline passengers, 5-star hotel guests, and fine-dining restaurant customers show this unforgiving attitude toward what is a satisfying service experience.

We just got an e-mail that illustrates this example:

"When you go to Metrowalk, you would already expect, by the establishments and the environment, that the restaurants and services that you'll get are all satisfactory, if not the best. However, I was appalled, disgusted, and sickened with what I saw and experienced in [xyz establishment] Who would've thought that this popular place could have a disastrous management?

It was just a simple weekday after work and my friend and I decided to try a different establishment in Metrowalk, so we finally decided on [xyz]. The moment we walked in, both of us noticed three tiny cockroaches walking around the place and at least four dead ones scattered around the establishment, and to think that I haven't even gone to the restroom yet.

When I did go to the restroom to wash my hands while my friend was ordering, I could not believe the hideousness of the site before me. There were even more dead coackroaches, two were barely alive and crawling, and I was guessing that they slowly perished because of the repulsive odor that plagued me even until the time I got home. And to top it all off, the waiters and waitresses did not look very sanitary at all. One of them, while standing, lifted one foot and even removed his shoe in front of me as I went back to our table. Naturally after seeing and experiencing all that, I, on the other hand, was not as forgiving. I begged my friend to leave the place, and I lost my appetite in the process. I'm sorry, but I can't help but tell others of what I experienced, and that is the power of word-of-mouth.

Who would've thought that a place like Metrowalk would have room for a place like that? I patronize the restaurant and I even find the service satisfactory, especially in their branch at Food Choices in Glorietta. This is a call on the manager of this ice cream and halo-halo place in Metrowalk to do something about the place and the employees serving. My total satisfaction after that, is a negative 100 percent." (Amethyst)

So do you continue giving bad service with your good food? You should be able to answer that by now-we hope!

Keep your questions coming. Send them to us at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412.

Event reaches out to SMEs

THE ORGANIZER of the grand international franchise event slated in Manila next month reaches out to the country's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to help turn them into viable and franchises.

This was announced by the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA), the organizer of the Philippine International Franchise Conference and Expo (PIFCE) 2005 slated at the World Trade Center Metro Manila on July 15 to 17.

PFA will have a "Franchise Incubation Center" at the PIFCE 2005 principally for the SMEs, which actually account for the biggest bulk of the country's business enterprises.

"Including micro-enterprises, the SMEs comprise a total of 808,634 companies, or 99.6 percent of the country's 811,592 firms. Yet, the SMEs, which also account for 70 percent of national employment, contribute only 32 percent to our total gross domestic product (GDP). PIFCE 2005 can, therefore, help our SMEs increase productivity and product quality, expand their markets, and ultimately attain economies of scale through franchising," said PFA president Bing S. Limjoco.

"That is the reason why the PFA is allocating a bigger space for the expo's Franchise Incubation Center this year, which is to accommodate more SMEs and provide them with full assistance in franchise development," Limjoco explained.

A joint project of the PFA and the Department of Trade and Industry, the incubation center will assist and feature SMEs and startup companies that are potential franchisors.

"These SMEs may start out as branded kiosks, but which can eventually grow nationally and globally," Limjoco added. Some of the successful franchises that started at PIFCE's Incubation Center include Reyes Haircutters, Hotshots, Delifresh, Ibay Silver Shop, Fruit Haven, Kettle Korn, H Salon, Sweet Dreams, Kiss King of Balls, and Krispy Kimpao.

Dubbed as "Franchise 2005," the event is being supported by the Asia Pacific Franchise Confederation and the World Franchise Council, and will be participated in by successful local and international franchises, including those from the United Kingdom, Malaysia, and Thailand, among many others.

Franchise 2005 will occupy Halls B and C of the World Trade Center Metro Manila as it is geared to surpass its last year's record turnout of more than 15,000 visitors, around 250 concepts, and over $5.4 million (P300 million) worth of new businesses.

Franchise Expo 2005 will also include seminars on how to franchise your business, and presentations on various aspects of franchising and available franchise opportunities.

Other expo details can be obtained from exhibit manager Worldexco (tel. 8918638, 8347505; fax 8340608; or email mktg@worldexco.com).

PIFCE is the country's biggest and longest-running annual international franchise event that now spans 13 years. Through PIFCE, the PFA spearheaded the growth of the Philippine franchise industry from only 50 franchises in the early 90s to over 850 in 2004.

This growth has directly led to the increase of industry sales turnover from just $936 million in 1997 to over $2 billion last year.

Two women and a fruit cart venture

FRANCHISING has empowered people from all walks of life. It has brought financial independence and pride in the hearts of its franchisees-people who dreamed of being their own bosses and who made this come true.

Usually the franchise holder owns the majority of the stores but Lester Yu of Fruitas, only owns one of the 69 outlets of Fruitas.

"To this day I only own one Fruitas outlet because of the sentimental value it holds for me and I want to play it fair to my franchisees. Human nature *kasi unahin mo ang sarili mong* outlets but my thinking is if I only have one then I will not be pressured into looking after my own outlets first, says Lester.

"More than that, I maintain my flagship Fruitas outlet as my testing ground. We regularly come up with new product offerings while maintaining the old-time favorites. This way, people will always have an array of choices. It's living up Fruitas fame as the coolest franchise business to get into," said the young product development and marketing whiz. Fruitas is proud to have franchisees with inspiring stories to tell people who are looking for business opportunities.

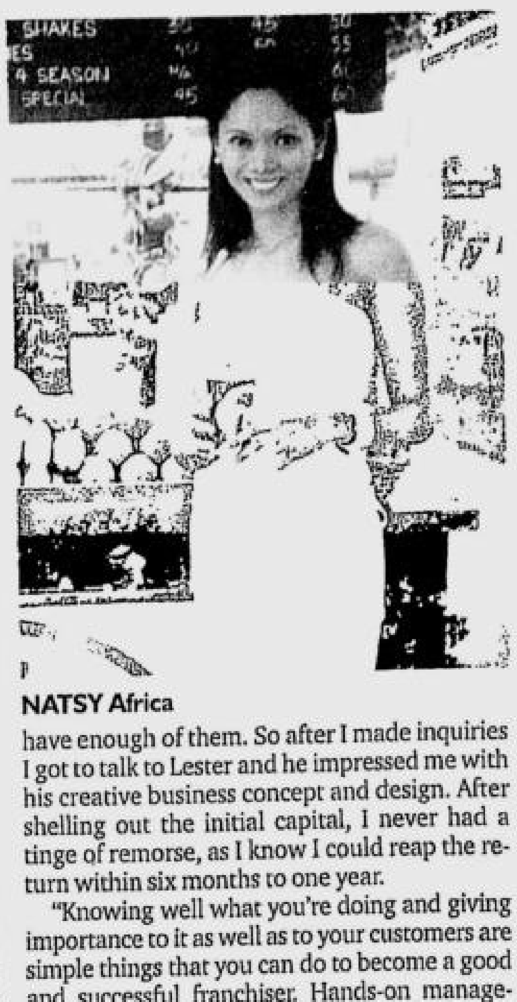
Thirty-seven-year-old Natsy Africa is a gender specialist who buys her Fruitas juice at the SM West branch. She doesn't want to take anything that will pollute her body so fresh fruit juices work for her. A mother who is very particular with what food she gives her children, she has been looking into the possibility of getting a franchise. She decided that food business would be best as it is one of the primary needs of people.

Shortly after meeting Yu, it was a closed deal. "The business package is very reasonable. He even tipped me off to check Robinsons Metro East. Two weeks after I opened at Sta. Lucia East Mall, I signed for a new stall at Robinsons," says Natsy

When she visits her cart, she gets to meet students, foreigners, deaf-mute people, and office workers. Some even come to buy twice a day.

Another franchisee who believes in creative ideas and doesn't fear to try new things is Susan Baltazar, Fruitas Araneta Square Monumento branch franchisee who found another calling on fruit shake business.

SUSAN Baltazar



NATSY Africa

"Being the mother of four children, I am always getting worried about their future. I know that with today's cost of living it is absolutely difficult to survive. I'm just fortunate that I am tough and dedicated, and these traits help me to pursue businesses despite many obstacles. My husband is very supportive of me. I believe my passion for business was entirely his influence. He started operating his own business right after he graduated in college.

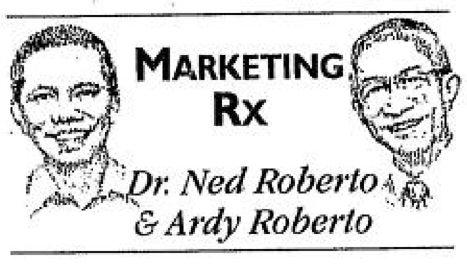
Despite owning and running their own school (New Prodon Academy of Valenzuela), Susan got into franchising a Fruitas outlet. "At first I didn't give it a thought because honestly, earnings from a Fruitas cart was small compared to what we earn from the school. But when I visited the mall with our children and we tried Fruitas shakes I became obsessed with the idea of owning one.

"The drinks were so good my kids couldn't have enough of them. So after I made inquiries I got to talk to Lester and he impressed me with his creative business concept and design. After shelling out the initial capital, I never had a tinge of remorse, as I know I could reap the return within six months to one year.

"Knowing well what you're doing and giving importance to it as well as to your customers are simple things that you can do to become a good and successful franchiser. Hands-on management. That's the only way to succeed in this kind of business. You have to know how to make shakes, how to serve them, how to do the inventory and establish good client relations. These are critical areas in the cart business that all owners should know by heart. Owners should also lead by example-be there for your staff because that's a sure-fire morale booster and it sends the signal that you are committed to your business as much as they are," ends Yu.

For franchising inquiries, you may call telephone nos. 7318886 / 7319178.

'Why do my customers come back even if I have bad service?'—Conclusion



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

Q: THERE were previous occasions when you warned those of us in service marketing that if we get a zero rating from our customers in even just one of the 4 determinants of a satisfactory service, we would lose customers. I run a chain of several "Pares" restaurants catering to the Class D and even Class E eating-out crowd who like my rice-toppings. But every so often, one or two of my Pares branches get a zero in service when a new service crew, for example, serves the rice topping with his thumb digging into the rice bowl. Or a zero in service outlet when the table, floor or toilet is not that clean. And yet, even in these "bad" branches, customers keep coming back. "Will my luck run out if I keep on giving bad service?"

To answer that question we gave examples of how the Filipino consumers, especially the *masa*, are more forgiving and therefore we offered an alternative to the "multiplicative" service principle model. Our modification of Harvard's Christopher Lovelock's service satisfying principle and to accordingly restate it in two parts is worth repeating as follows:

Part 1: "When you have customers who are 'unforgiving' in the sense that one mistake can wipe out your 5 or even 10 good points, the multiplicative principle applies. So with this customer segment, you must be consistently excellent in ALL FOUR determinants of a satisfactory service."

Part 2: "When you have customers who are 'forgiving' in that they try to understand (and at times, even make excuses in their minds for you) as to why you are deficient in one or two of the 4 determinants of a satisfactory service, then it is the additive and not the multiplicative principle that applies. So you just must make sure you are excellent in the one or two determinants that matter most to these customers so that where you excel will compensate for your deficiency in the remaining determinants."

For clarity, a brief explanation of the "additive principle" is in order. Let's recall and take your specific case as the example to explain. Here are your multiplicative scores:

Total satisfaction score = (10 in food satisfaction) x (10 in service staff satisfaction) x (10 in service venue satisfaction) x (0 in service processing satisfaction) = 0 total satisfaction score out of 10,000 total= 0 percent of the total

But if your customer segment is into the "additive" satisfaction process, your additive scores will be:

Total satisfaction score = (10 + 10 + 10 + 0)= 30 total satisfaction score out of 40 total= 75 percent of the total (which is not bad at all)!

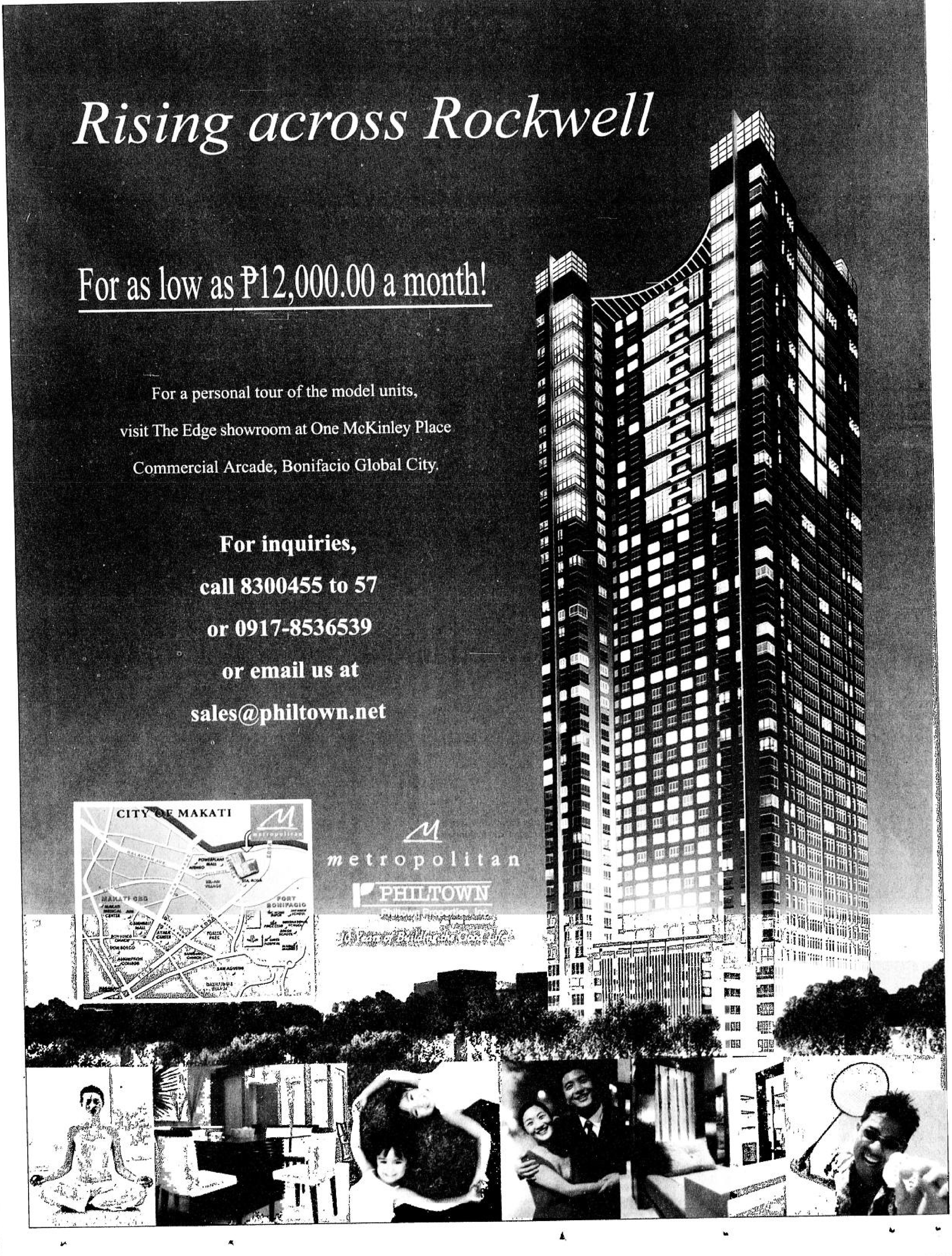
It should now be clear to you that your case belongs to Part 2 of the customer satisfaction model. You have customers who are forgiving and process their experience in your Pares restaurant along the additive principle.

Now we answer the last part of your question.

'Will my luck run out if I keep on giving bad service?'

You have to face up to your strategic and long-term challenge. This is in this set of two questions: "Will your current

WHY DO/ B2-3



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PLANET Ocean watches from Omega

JEAN-CLAUDE Monachon, Omega Ltd. VP for product development, and Oliver Hugentobler, area sales manager PHOTOS BY RODEL ROTONI

Ocean deep

While the first Seamaster went as deep as 300 meters, Planet Ocean, its modern edition, goes twice as deep at 600 m

By Anne A. Jambora

IT'S like the ocean on the wrist. Or, as its VP says, it gives the "emotion of going under the water."

The latest offering from Swiss watchmaker Omega completes at last its series of modern takes to its three 1957 classic watches: the Speedmaster, the Railmaster and, now, the Seamaster.

"We took the watch that was very successful 50 years ago and adapted into it the design philosophy of the third millennium. From far away it looks the same, but we have improved the technology and changed some details of the design," says Jean-Claude Monachon, VP for product development of Omega Ltd.

While the first Seamaster went as deep as 300 meters, Planet Ocean, its modern edition, goes twice as deep at 600 m. A timeless feature, for instance, is the distinct unidirectional rotating bezel, grooved with the classic Arabic numerals, that comes in two colors: formal, standard black or sporty orange. It's not a coincidence, though, that black and orange are two of the colors most visible underwater.

Trendier colors

Monachon says Omega's choice for trendier colors is part of the company's marketing position, which is: While it puts together something useful, such as a diver's watch, it is still attuned to what's fashionable. The color orange, he says, is just as stylish as it is functional.

Both function and design are given equal importance during conceptualization, he says. One cannot do without the other since a great design might not hold in together the watch's mechanism, or vice versa.

Take Planet Ocean's ladies' watch, which Monachon says is fortunate enough to have been produced at a time when big faces are in vogue. For mechanical watches, such as those manufactured by Omega, the large dials allow bigger movement that in turn provides greater strength in giving accurate time.

But, really now, who needs a watch that can still perfectly function at 600 m underwater? More importantly, how many, if ever, actually dive at such depth?

Monachon admits most of Omega's clientele are not even into the underwater sport. "Doing a watch that goes 600 m underwater is useless—we can even go up to 1,000 m," Monachon says.

So it's not the fact that it can go underwater that is important, he says, but finding a watch for everyday life that calls to mind images of the ocean. Like it or not, most people wear Omega watches for the status the brand represents. Image, says Monachon, can mean everything for a premium brand.

Set to revolutionize the Omega mechanism is an innovative feature of Planet Ocean called the Co-Axial Escapement. This invention replaces the old mechanism—the heart of every watch—of circular "teeth," those two metallic elements that constantly touch each other, with a device that has a sliding effect instead.

The old mechanism, says Monachon, accumulates minute dust particles due to the friction. More dust means more lubrication to keep the mechanism going. But the oil helps collect too much dust over the years as well that the watch's accuracy drops, or shuts down completely, and would need servicing after three or four years.

With the Co-Axial Escapement, no friction is involved, resulting to much less dust accumulation and the need for lubricants. That means, he says, better mileage for the watch—as in time accuracy even after eight, nine or 10 years.

"We are the only brand in the world with this technology. This is our service to our consumers," Monachon says.

Expectations for Planet Ocean are huge. In Europe alone, a single delivery of 30,000 units was sold out in a matter of weeks.

Planet Ocean also comes with the helium Escape Valve. This valve allows elements of helium gas, which seeps inside the watch during compression, to escape during decompression with a simple turn of the screw. This exclusive feature prevents any damage, permanent or otherwise, to the watch.

There are 12 models for this line in 45.5 and 42 mm sizes. Bezels and dials are either black or orange, in four different straps of orange and brown alligator, steel and rubber.

While the old adage says never fix anything that isn't broken, especially one that was perfected some 250 years ago, Omega, says Monachon, thinks otherwise—sometimes, that is. That risk has paid off richly in the end.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

Chances are, other papers will refuse to run this ad.

Well, at least, majority of all broadsheet readers nationwide will know about the latest AC Nielsen Survey that says that the Philippine Daily Inquirer has a nationwide readership of 55% across all demographics. We'd like to thank the reading public for making the Inquirer the No. 1 newspaper in the country today. What a great way to celebrate our 20th year.

SAMSUNG hotshots: Hyuck Jae Shim, president and CEO, and Maeng dal Bae, VP for marketing ICT

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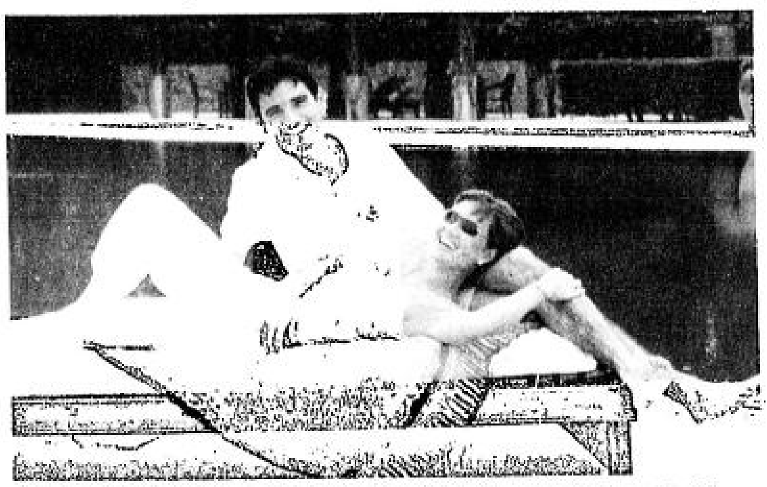
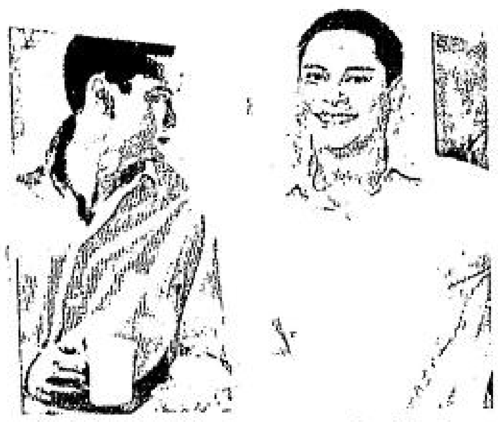
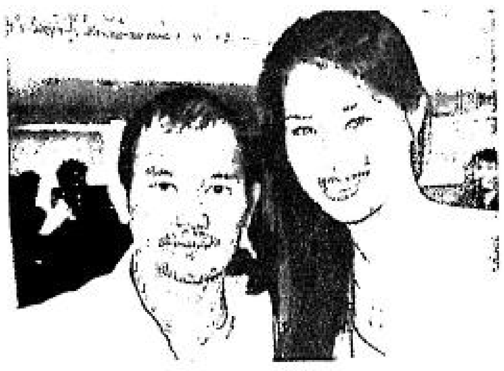


YOUNG business achiever Carlos Elizalde and wife Melissa Aboitiz

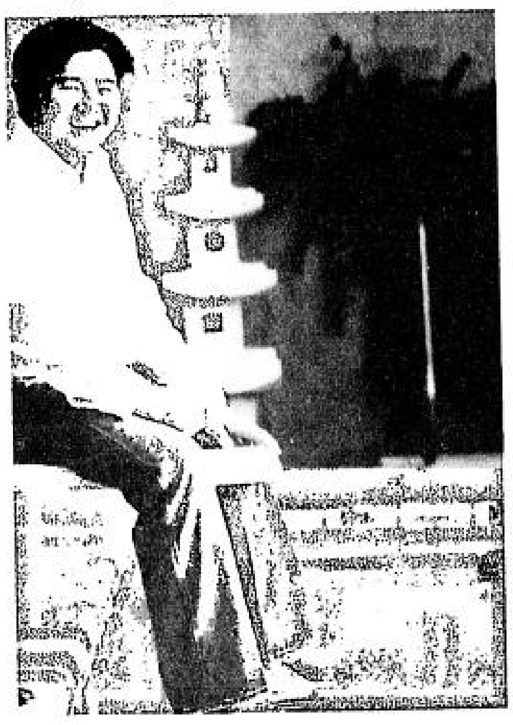
FAB architect and interior designer Ed Calma



INTERNATIONAL currency trader Mandy Boy Eduque

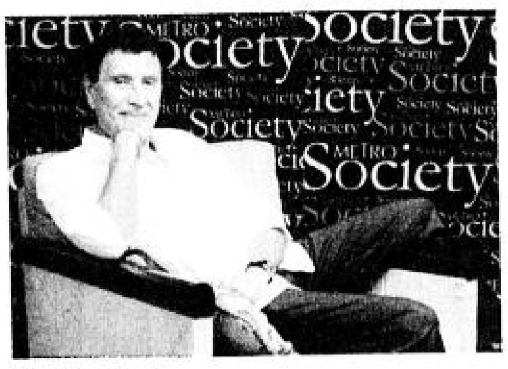


RUSTAN's elusive U man: Joel Tantoco with his lady love, gorgeous Lisa Olarte Rositter



ANTON Huang, EVP, Stores Specialists, Inc.

WARNER Manning, popular president and CEO of HSBC



GUESS who?

DAVAO businessman Anton Lagdameo and wife Dawn Zulueta

ARCHITECT and interior designer Gelo Mañosa

Hurrah to the nation! Hurrah to men!

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

HEY, *palanggas*, *apres* the packed "Drop at Embassy" bash, featuring cool **Joel Lai**, Hong Kong's finest DJ and owner of the famous VIP dance club in Soho, Drop Team Bigfish joined hands with popular Addict Mobile and the hard-to-beat Nokia to bring back to Manille the world's clubbing pioneer, Ministry of Sound, for a major feel-good Independence Day celebration at the NBC Tent.

As everyone was going ga-ga over a cassette tape, some 300 beautiful partyphiles celebrated Philippine National Day by dancing the night away to the funky house tunes of DJs **Johnboy Lee** and **Axwell** of the Ministry of Sound.

Feeling the Ministry of Sound vibe were gorgeous **Joanne Primero** and **Pixie Cheah**, with **Ricky Daker** and award-winning movie and TV set designer **Gerry Santos**.

For the first time in the party circuit scene, *palanggas*, the happening was opened by a rock rendition of the Philippine national anthem, superbly belted out by **Scarlet** of Brownbeat with **Noni Aurillo** on lead guitar. The song blew the minds of the proud partygoers who screamed their hearts out, while the colors of our nation ran through the ceiling of the NBC Tent.

There was a super special section for the 200 especially chosen ones: the Addict Mobile exclusive VIP, where the guests witnessed the visuals and laser lights.

At the circular bar were **Danby** and **Atom Henares**, who were scouting the dance floor for beautiful faces.

Dashing in latish but in style were fashion designers **Randy Ortiz** and **Tonichi Nocum** with Propaganda's **Jing Monis** .

It was crystal clear that Team Bigfish, with the support of Addict Mobile and Nokia, has done it again.

"It's all about good vibes, through forward-thinking music. My mission is to take the local clubbing culture to the next level, by promoting the new dance music of today," explained Bigfish main man, **Domini Primero**, the hard-to-beat, leading dance event promoter, dahlings.

Well, *palanggas*, as we celebrated our hard-earned independence, we also celebrated our right to party, *n'est çe pas* ? As in, *di bala*?

Samsung's men

Samsung is such a dazzler these days. After three or four super happenings, Samsung was at it again, hosting "Men and their Moments," a fab photo exhibit of some of the Philippines' most elusive, influential and high-profile partying characters, mounted by Metro Society Mag, *palanggas*.

The smashing and successful opening was held at the Conservatory of the Peninsula Manila. The visual showcase featured some 50 photographs from the trendy magazine.

In honor of the fantastic role these successful individuals play, Samsung offers the ultimate power tool, the D5OO phone (which *moi* can swear by, dahlings), elegantly designed for the definitive man of true style and substance.

Samsung Philippines' hotshot president, the amiable **Hyuck Jae Shim** , explained, "As another side to these personalities came alive, captured through photographs, we saw deeper and deeper into the profile of our Samsung D500 man. (The D500 is) celebrated as, 'the handset of the year.'"

Added Hyuck: "The Samsung D500 man is... a successful career person, a father, a friend, an athlete, a hobbyist, a competitor... he is all that and more. In collaboration with Metro Society, we celebrate these men, a fusion of the best that breathes inspiration and innovation."

Metro Society's brilliant **Philip Cu-Unjieng** then took centerstage and extended appreciation to "the men who gamely welcomed to reveal their other side."

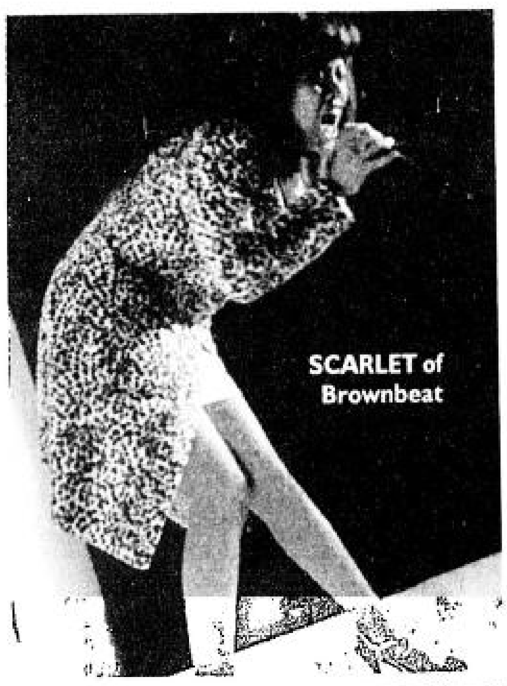
Well, here are some of the photos of the 50 chosen ones, *palanggas*, photographed by some of today's best lensmen.

The D500 cell phone is a tri-band handset—it's empowerment in a small gorgeous package, which breathes inspiration and innovation. It comes in super sleek midnight black and silver.

Check it out, *palanggas*. The D500 is such a smooth, cool looker.

IN THE FIELD of polo: Santi Elizalde

DONNIE Tantoco, president, Shopwise and Rustan Supercenters Inc.



SCARLET of Brownbeat

BEAUTY queen and Bigfish main woman Joanne Primero and movie star Sharmaine Arnaiz

HOT party gals: Giselle Sityar and Ria Romero

IT'S party time: Chinggay Andrada and her love, architect Victor Consunji, with Caroline Baker and Jigger Antonio

TINA Tinio, Celine Lopez and Marcel Crespo

PDI Super! writer, vivacious Tals Diaz, with Ton Gatmaitan of Ideal Minds

WE LOVE BIGFISH: Polo player Osang Yulo and gorgeous Faith Amigo

HEY, just friends: Ricky Daker with Bigfish first lady Pixie Cheah

MABUHAY
BIGFISH

BIGFISH main man and top-of-the-line promoter, Domini Primero, with good-looking DJ Axwell of Ministry of Sound

MARIKO Jacinto with David Nugent and Hong Kong banker David Jacob

DANBY Henares, Anja Anenkova, Elena Kern, Juli Salazar, Atom Henares, Dr. Jasmine Vergara and Franie Gallardo

BBCHD holds general assembly today

THE BISHOPS-BUSINESSMEN'S Conference for Human Development is holding its 29th general assembly and annual meeting today, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., at AIM Conference Center, Makati. Call 9279661/ 9263262.

GOINGS ON

ACTIVITIES. Starland Theme park and Resort offers weekend activities for children. Catch the Juggling Mono Cyclist around Starland's activity area on July 10, 3 p.m. Clowns and magicians perform at 3 p.m. on July 17 in the same venue. The Search for a Singing Star Showdown kicks off on July 24. A magic and mime show is set on July 31, 3 p.m. Call 8504283.

SEMINAR. Nu Skin will celebrate its accomplished distributors' personal and professional victories in Success Seminar on July 15 at ballrooms 1 and 2 of Dusit Hotel Nikko. Call 6890333.

EXHIBIT. Explore the outdoor challenge of Southern Tagalog Region as it showcases "Philippines' Bests! 2005" today until July 31 at Clamshell I, Intramuros, Manila. Admission is free.

WORKSHOP. A workshop on Appreciating Modern Art is set tomorrow, 10 a.m.-12 nn at Raya School, 73-A Scout Limbaga St., QC. Call 3762184.

DANCE SHOW. Concert at the Park presents the Far Eastern University Modern Dance Troupe in "Emergence" on July 10, 5 p.m., at Rizal Park open-air auditorium, Manila. Admission is free.

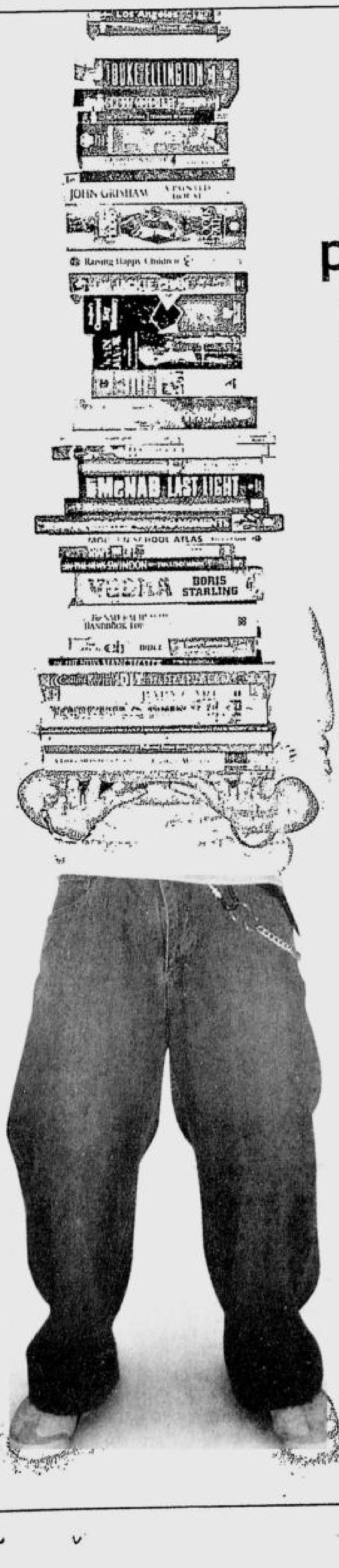
SEMINAR. AIGS Marketing Corporation offers free seminars on detox treatment on July 11, 18 and 25 at Unit 1408, Jollibee Plaza, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig. Call 6873016.

BOOK FAIR. The 9th Philippine Academic Bookfair will be held July 11-15, 9 a.m.-7 p.m., at PTA Tent-Clamshell 2, Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. Call 9279858/ 9254572.

SUPERMODEL SEARCH
The search is on for the next Supermodel of the World. The winner in the annual contest organized by the Ford Modeling Agency will get a round-trip ticket to New York to represent the Philippines in the Supermodel of the World finals and compete for the grand prize of $250,000 worth of modeling contracts. Contact Runway Productions at 7533688 or apply online at www.supermodelphilippines.com or www.calcarries.com. Applicants will be screened on July 23 for Cebu, July 30 for Iloilo, July 31 for Davao and Aug. 6 for Manila.

FESTIVAL. Koronadal City, South Cotabato, celebrates its 39th year with activities on July 11-18. These include agri-trade fair, technology and tourism expo, thanksgiving Mass, civic military parade, drum and lyre and float competition, battle of the bands, Search for Mutya ng South beauty pageant, fellowship night and street disco.

POETRY READING. The University of Santo Tomas Center for Creative Writing and Studies will hold a poetry reading session on July 15 at UST Museum of Arts and Sciences.



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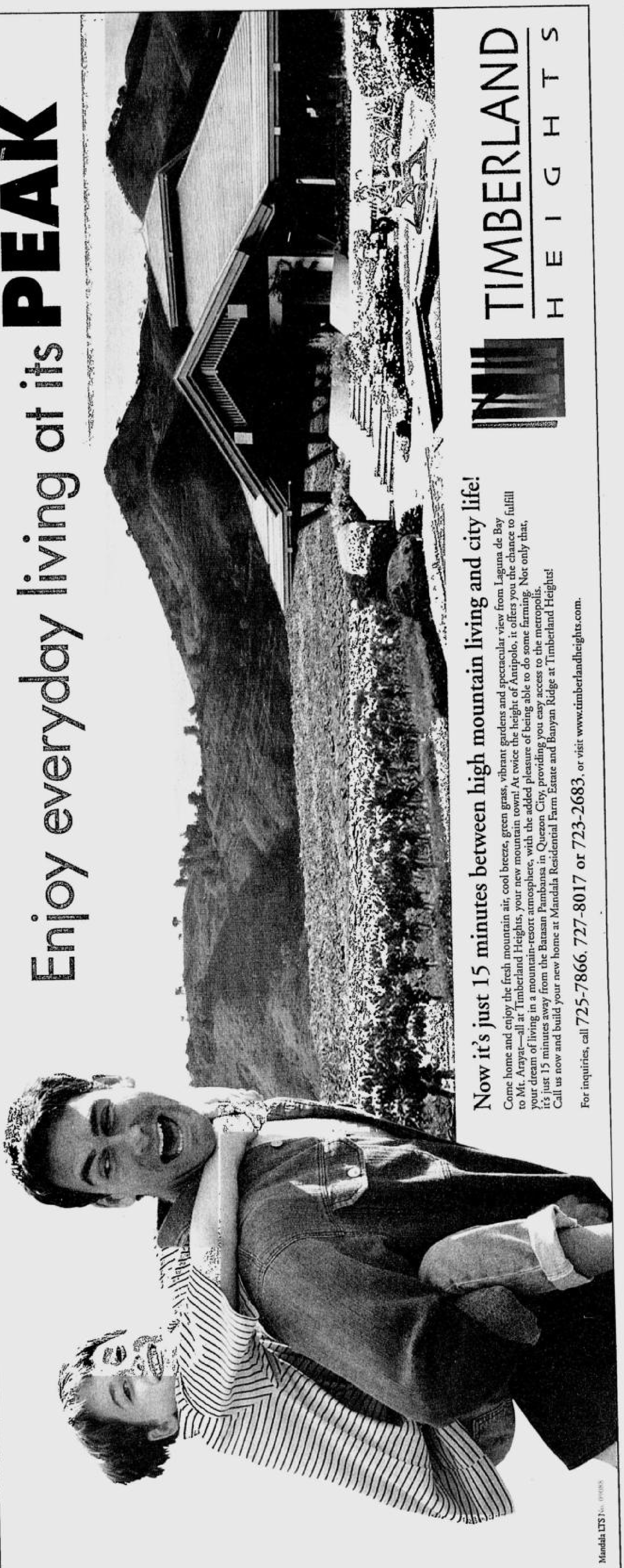
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SM ADVANTAGE TAKES SHOPPING TO NEW HEIGHTS

Top L-R: Cristy Schneck, Promotions Manager (MCI); Barbara "Babsie" Aragon, AVP-Product (PAL); Ria Domingo, Program Development and Communications Manager (PAL); Nina Tchoi, Product Loyalty Marketing Officer (PAL) **Bottom L-R :** Rey T. Maclang, AVP for Marketing (MCI); Bady C. Golangco, President (MCI); Henry So Uy, Executive Vice President Commercial Group & Exec. Asst. to the Chairman & CEO (PAL); Felix J. Cruz, Vice President Marketing Support

SM Advantage, the loyalty program of the SM Retail group, in its continuing thrust to reward loyal SM shoppers, has come up with another exciting members-only program, this time in partnership with Philippine Airlines.

Beginning July 8, 2005, SM Advantage members may now convert their SMAC points to PAL Mabuhay Miles. This new program gives SM Advantage members, who are also Mabuhay Miles members, the privilege of earning free flights faster.

The marketing tie-up between SM Advantage and PAL Mabuhay Miles was formalized in a simple signing ceremony held recently at PAL's corporate headquarters in Makati. The event was attended by key executives from both groups led by Bady C. Golangco, President of SM's Marketing Convergence, Inc. and Henry So Uy, EVP Commercial Group & Exec. Asst. to the Chairman & CEO of PAL.

SMAC'S POINTS-TO-MILES CONVERSION PROGRAM

The new Points-to-Miles Conversion Program of SM Advantage allows members, who are also enrolled with PAL's Mabuhay Miles Program, to use their SMAC points to redeem Mabuhay Miles for free flights.

To qualify, members must have a Mabuhay Miles account, and a minimum balance of 450 points in their SM Advantage Card. For members who are not yet enrolled in the PAL Mabuhay Miles Program, enrollment forms are available at the Customer Service Counter of any SM Department Store.

To convert their SMAC points to Mabuhay Miles, members may simply approach any SM Department Store Customer Service Counter and present both their SM Advantage and PAL Mabuhay Miles Cards. While there is no limit to the number of points that can be converted, conversion can only be made in increments of 450 points. Miles converted from SMAC points will be credited to the members' Mabuhay Miles account after about 10 days.

WHAT IS MABUHAY MILES?

Mabuhay Miles is the frequent flyer program of Philippine Airlines, the country's flag carrier. In this program, travelers who frequently fly PAL earn Miles based on actual flight miles on paid tickets in any class of service. Accumulated Miles can then be used to redeem free flights to any PAL destination. Miles may also be earned through Air Philippines, through code-share flights on airline partners and through program partners such as SM Advantage. For inquiries concerning PAL Mabuhay Miles, SMAC members may call (632) 817-8000, or log on to **www. mabuhaymiles. com.**

Use your SMAC every time you shop at any SM Advantage retail partner to avail of exclusive privileges and earn rewards points that you can convert to Mabuhay Miles.

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Now, you can convert your SM Advantage points to PAL Mabuhay Miles for free flights!

Just visit the Customer Service Counter of any SM Department Store branch and sign up for this exciting new program. Please note that the points to miles conversion can only be made in increments of 450 SM Advantage points.

Philippine Airlines mabuhay MILES

www.mabuhaymiles.com

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VMV Glow on Lip and Cheek Tint 001

Get cheeky

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

EVERYONE knows how crazy I am about makeup, lipstick in particular. Recently, though, I have taken a special interest in having bright-colored cheeks with nude or colored lips. Coloring is flattering for Asian skin, giving it a dramatic, sexy and fresh look all at once. So if you see a small, pale girl outside with flushed cheeks and lips that look nude or a torridly kissed bright pink or red, she could be me.

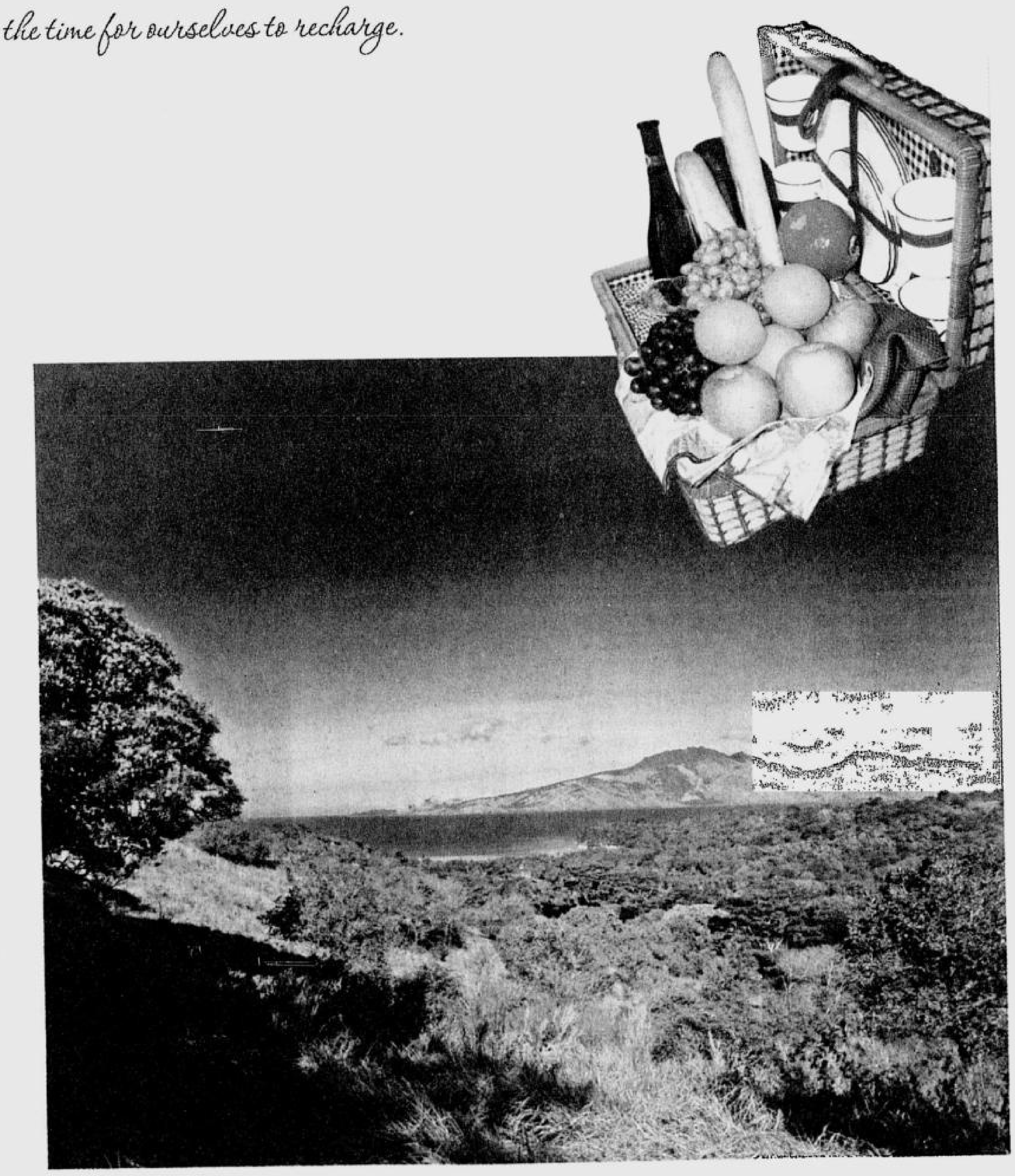
Some colors are meant for double-duty—for cheeks and lips—while others are only for the cheeks, but I use them for both anyway. In the process, I have won a lot of friends.

Bobbi Brown Pot Rouge for Lips and Cheeks come in nine shades. My favorites are Chocolate Cherry (rich brown red) and Pink Truffle (pinky brown nude).

Clarins Multi Blush for eyes, cheeks and lips, like BB, is a cream that dries to a pigment-rich silky powder, so there is no worry about lips being too dry and cheeks being too greasy.

GET/ D3

SUGAR Baby Cheek-a-Boo in Flush Blush, P945



Never a dull moment! We get to do things together and also the things we enjoy on our own. So my kids take to the outdoors... as for hubby and I? We take the time for ourselves to recharge.

Anvaya Cove combines modern conveniences with outdoor pleasures. In the heart of this enviable, exclusive leisure community is the Beach and Nature Club — a gathering place amidst spectacular lagoon landscaping - - for wining, dining and unwinding. With an excellent service staff and specially trained rangers to attend to all your needs.

Varied recreational amenities provide opportunities for bonding and unique experiences that all members can share. Beachside barbecues at the Pawikan Bar & Grille and buffet lunches at the Bamboo Café make great excuses for fun family reunions all year round. Take time out to rejuvenate with a special massage at the Veda Spa under tropical foliage. Cool down with your favorite summer shakes at the Tower Bar. Get the clan together for a game of frisbee at the Great Lawn.

Own a slice of paradise and dare to live the life you've always wanted. Your exclusive membership in the Beach and Nature Club offers you options to extend this experience. Select a residential lot where you can build your dream vacation home. Or own one of a number of luxurious seaside villas located a short walk away from the main beach.

In your search for the ideal second home, there is absolutely no leisure community in the country that is as warm and inviting for your family as Anvaya Cove.

By Ayala Land, naturally.

It's a family affair.

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Freddie got mugged

A theater artist's experience in Australia is so now

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

WE got a timely e-mail from leading theater director/artist **Freddie Santos** on how he just got mugged in Melbourne. It wasn't his mugging that was timely; it's the message that's so apt to the nation's mood. Our collective psyche is being mugged—yet again. Been there-done that—but, although hard we try, we still can't get anesthetized to the political mess.

So from one mugging victim to a collective another, here's an excerpt from Freddie's account of the R-and-R trip to New Zealand and Melbourne he saved up for:

"It happened at a small quiet stretch of park right outside a huge tent venue. I was there to get my ticket for the radical and edgy Australian Circus show that night.

"I had arrived too early and there was no one in sight. A young lady in jacket and jeans saw me taking shots with my video camera and started getting 'friendly,' asking if I wanted her to take shots of me. I thanked her, declined and walked away, packing my camera into my bag.

"Suddenly, she was walking beside me and starting up another conversation. I became suspicious so I excused myself and turned into that quiet stretch of park.

"Not a minute had gone by when I heard footsteps behind me, matching my steps. I should have run but having traveled alone so often in the past, I tried not to make a big thing out of it.

"Next thing I knew, a man grabbed me, shouting: 'I've got a knife! Give me your cell phone, your wallet and your camera!'

"My anger rose. I started shouting back 'No! No!' and tried to move away from him.

"He began hitting me in the face until he knocked me down. I still resisted, pushing away with my backpack as best as I could, all the time trying to see where his knife was. I started shouting out prayers in tongues and you know how loud and unnerving my voice can get!

"He got more violent and began pummeling my face with continuous punches until I was unconscious.

"God only knows what happened next but miracles were aplenty because when I came to I was already in an ambulance... alive and whole, beaten up but unstabbed!

"... I lost consciousness again and woke up to find myself in a hospital. How did I get to such places? I remembered my prayer—shouting and realized prayers really do not go unheard. My face felt sore, swollen and dirty. I wanted to wash up so I went to look for the toilet.

"Now, here's a tip for anyone wanting to find out how bad they look: Walk down the aisle of an emergency ward. If all the other patients with their own emergency situations stop and stare at YOU, you've just won the title for Mr. Dear-God-What-Happened!.

"... Upon entering the toilet, I was greeted by this creature in the mirror whose right side had swollen to such a degree, the 49-year-old ear behind it was out of sight. There was a small gash under my eye, blood splatters were all over and a red trickle had come out of my left nostril. On top of it all, throughout my face were these twilight-zone red marks which indicated where I had been hit.

"... The perp had gotten away with my cell phone, camera and backpack but he had missed my watch (more expensive than the camera), my ring, credit cards and best of all, my passport. The rest of my cash and other papers and tickets I had left, for the first time in my trip, in the hotel.

"... There were lots more to be grateful for that night.

"The next two days, Melbourne's finest would call me to find out how I was and to arrange for a sketching session at the Crime I.D. department. One cop confessed what happened to me was a rarity in Melbourne.

"... Truth to tell, right after that mugging, I missed all my student artists so much. I missed anything Pinoy! By the time I got home to Manila, I was even happy to see the traffic. New Zealand has the Southern Alps, Manila has billboards with Piolo selling every product category known to man. Okay *laaaang*!!!

"Today, despite some politicians who to my mind resemble muggers with the country as their victim, I am still pleased to be home."

Somehow, why do many of us feel like Freddie? We've been mugged, re-mugged, yet still can't call any other place our home, but this one.

Waiting for the swelling to subside—that's what every "mugged" Filipino is doing.

But—Freddie is not swearing off Australia. On the contrary, he recalled a moment right after he came to: "The person attending to me, doctor or cop, I'm not even sure, upon realizing I was a foreigner, quietly apologized on behalf of his fair city. No conditions, no excuses, just a simple, humble and humbling apology... there is no memory I hold of Australia that does not contain that moment shining at the top. Amazing what one apology can do to heal a broken soul..."

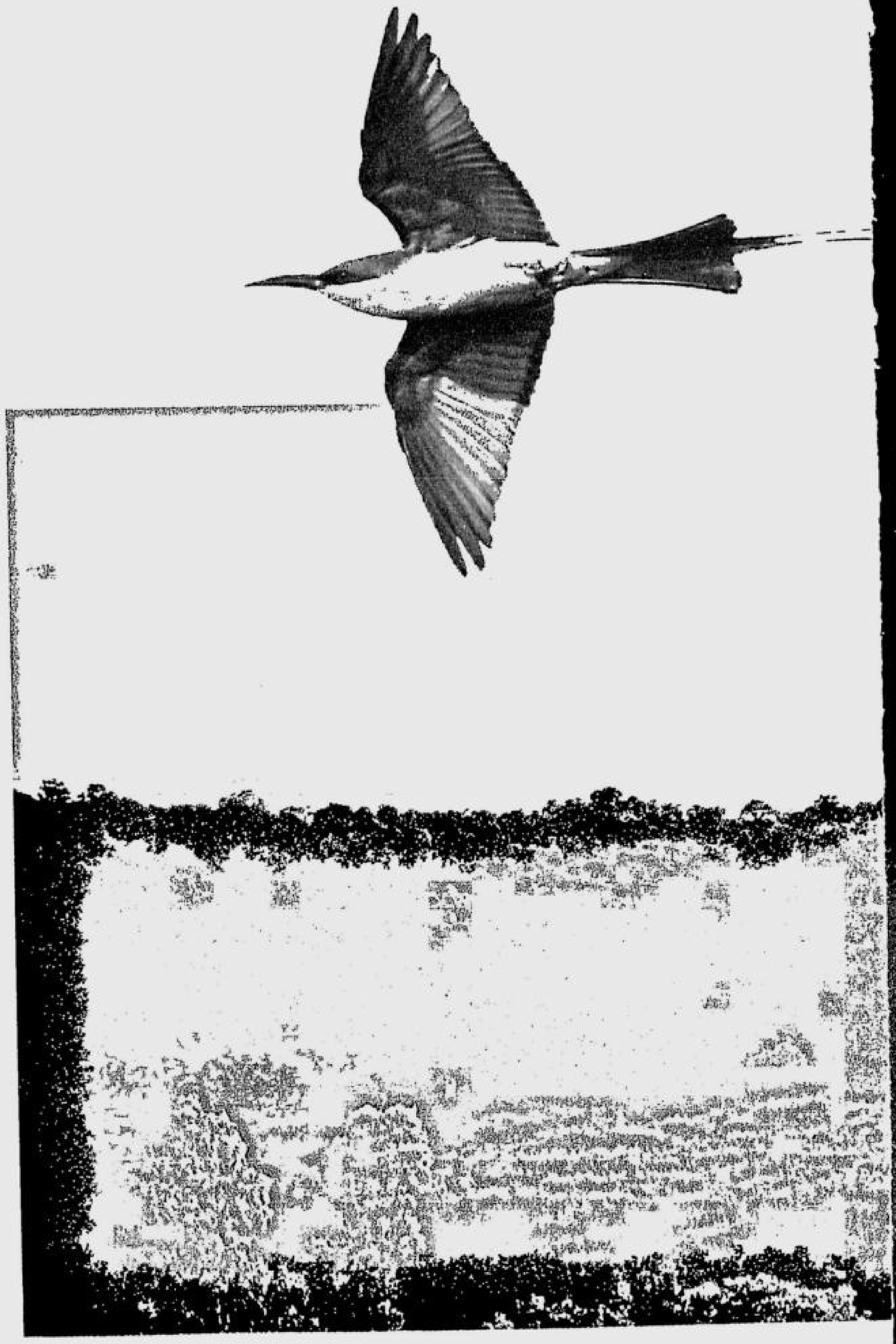
That's where the similarity between Freddie's mugging and ours ends. For many others, "sorry" isn't enough, unfortunately.

Black is so back

It's neither the mood nor the weather, but black is back—in softer silhouettes. After seasons of color, black is a welcome change—solid, uncluttered, neat... India continues to be a major influence of the collections. It is what's moving at retail abroad. Exotic India is in the detailing—beaded, mirrored and metallic trims, embroidery, spicy color and prints. Women's Wear Daily reports how it's been in the lines of major designers, from **Oscar de la Renta**, Gucci to **Monique Lhuillier** (yes, the Philippines' Monique is still so in the radar).

Black and hot-colored India? Two ends of the spectrum. But that's fashion.

Breathtaking, it seems like a dream. There's magic here. Where else would we w



"Anvaya" means family in the ancient, Asian spiritual language of Sanskrit. Indeed, the family is the very heart and inspiration of Anvaya Cove. Can you imagine that special place where the mountains slope gently to meet the sea? Where your family can bond closely, share unforgettable experiences and forge lifelong memories.

In the heart of this enviable, exclusive leisure community is the Anvaya Cove Beach and Nature Club — a members-only gathering place amidst spectacular lagoon landscaping — for wining, dining and unwinding. Where the recreational amenities provide opportunities for bonding and unique experiences that all family members can share.

Own a slice of paradise and dare to live the life you've always wanted. Your exclusive membership in the Beach and Nature Club offers you options to extend this experience. Select a residential lot where you can build your dream vacation home. Or own one of a number of luxurious seaside villas located a short walk away from the main beach.

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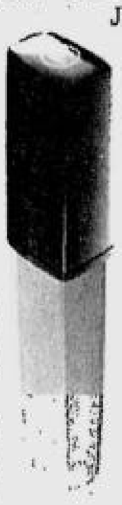
Get cheeky

From page D1

There are five shades in Clarins, but Tender Raspberry appeals to me the most—a bit too loud for lips but perfect for cheeks. Tender Mandarin and Tender Chestnut are more compatible with the eyes, lips and cheeks.

VMV Glow on Lip and Cheek Tint in Crush (deep bright pink) and Glow (deep red) flatter any Asian skin tone; they are my favorites. The fainthearted can go for the safe nudes or naturals such as Tea Rose, Chocolate Milk and Morning Sunshine. Deep complexions look fabulous in Candy Apple (deep berry) and Frosted Mocha (bronze gold).

Tip: The colors are a bit tricky for the cheeks. Those with very oily skin will benefit from their lasting power. Dry skin may find it difficult to blend with the cheeks. Certain cream blushes have the same perfect texture that can be used for lips as well. The one I get the most mileage out of is Sugar Baby's Flush Blush (P945), a berry-red shade I apply on a bare, just-cleansed cheeks and dry lips.



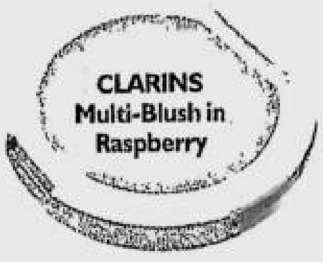
CHANEL Cristalle Gloss

Just a sweep of beige eye shadow, dark brown eyeliner and mascara, and I am all set.

The effect is instant: I look like a healthy school girl with bright eyes and glowing porcelain skin. A more dramatic effect is achieved with Nars cream blush in Montenegro (mahogany). Nars Orgasm fanatics no longer have to despair when they can't get hold of the Blush and Gloss. I discovered Laura Mercier's cream blush in Sun Ray (P895) has the same effect on lips and cheeks at only a fraction of the price.

Favorite nude lips

Having never gotten over my Angelina Jolie nude lipstick fixation, there are certain brands and colors I keep buying over and over in opaque gloss or cream lipstick form. They go with every attire, skin tone change, and occasion and are universally flattering.



CLARINS Multi-Blush in Raspberry

It has to be cream for me as my lips are very dry. So my staple is Bobbi Brown's Brown, the perfect nude shade. Bobbi Brown created and named it after herself (she had been searching but could never find the shade so she formulated one herself).

Women who still wish to go lighter should try Brownie. Laura Mercier's Discretion and Nude Lips are flattering to those with light to medium skin tone. You may also go for some pink nude shimmer drama with Lip Kisses SPF 15 in Seashell.

Clinique Color Surge Lip Gloss in Beach Bunny looks brown, but makes an extremely shiny nude pink without a greasy feel. Awake Stardom Volumizing Lip Glosses in Sun Spark and Dust Storm provide a very slick natural rose that makes the lips look sexy.

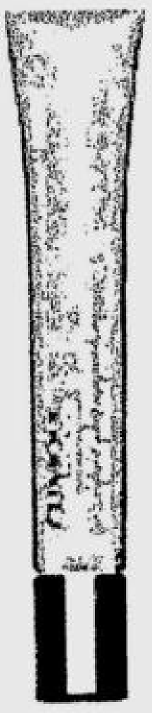
Chanel has returned as one of my favorite brands. Its new Cristalle Lip Gloss is better than the Glossimer since this not only gives sexy shine to the lips without the sticky feel, but it also has anti-oxidants that improve the color, texture and overall appearance of lips. I use it with Crayon Gloss in Pink Praline, the only moisturizing lip liner I know.

LAURA Mercier Cheek collection

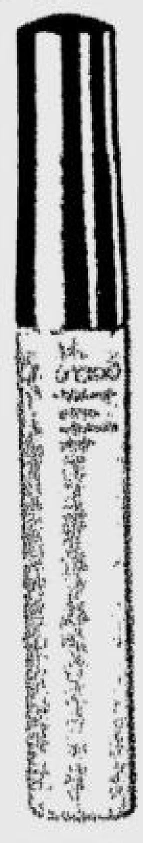
Shiseido has yet to invent a lip gloss shade that won't flatter me. It seems to know instinctively what Asians need. I use Lavender Loud, Mango Passion, Bare Berry and Pink Sand.

Favorite blush

Shu Uemura's P Red 19 looks scary on its own, but gives my skin a sexy glow that seems to come from within. Shu has given me cooling blush sticks in Rose and Pale Pink that I also use on my lips. For those who find cream too heavy and gel too dry, I recommend the Shu Air mousse in Coral or Rose for a sheer light finish. I am also a fan of peachy pink tones like Nars Amour Blush and Laura Mercier Nectar.



CLINIQUE Color Surge Lipgloss



SHISEIDO Mango Passion Gloss

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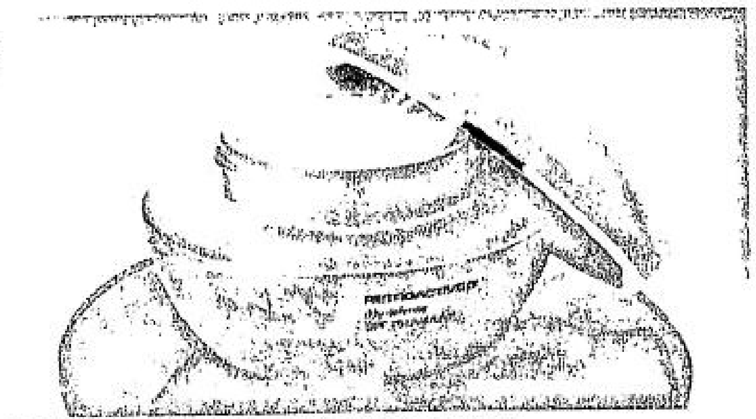


AVON Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense SPF 15

EXPOSURE to environmental pollutants and stress can lead to damaged skin and produce premature lines, skin discoloration, pigmentation and wrinkles.

Now, Avon introduces Avon Retroactive+ Day Defense SPF 15, your skin's best defense against aging. This innovative skin care product from Avon's anti-aging arsenal works four ways to bring back skin's youthful appearance and healthy glow, and keep it looking so, by erasing appearances of fine lines, wrinkles and imperfections; strengthening skin's resistance against early signs of aging by 42 percent for younger looking skin; working as a shield against environmental attacks and pollutants; and protecting skin against harmful sun damage.

When used in tandem with Anew Retroactive+ Repair Face Cream, Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense SPF 15 becomes part of a day/night system that provides round-the-clock skin protection.

Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense SPF 15 features the revolutionary Rejuvi-Cell formula which revitalizes skin, and the new patent-pending Strengthening Technology that includes deep-sea marine extracts and a quad antioxidant blend which includes rice bran, citrus flavonoids and rosemary, to help build the skin's immunity by nourishing it with nutrients needed to give skin extra strength. It also contains a protein blend, including pearl protein, silk protein and soybean protein, to strengthen skin.

After 1 week of use, 90 percent of women said their skin felt stronger and 87 percent of women showed improvement in skin clarity.

AD executive Chinky Veloso, former Bb. Pilipinas-Universe Nina Ricci Alagao and makeup artist Gela Laurel attest to Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense's revitalizing effects on the skin.

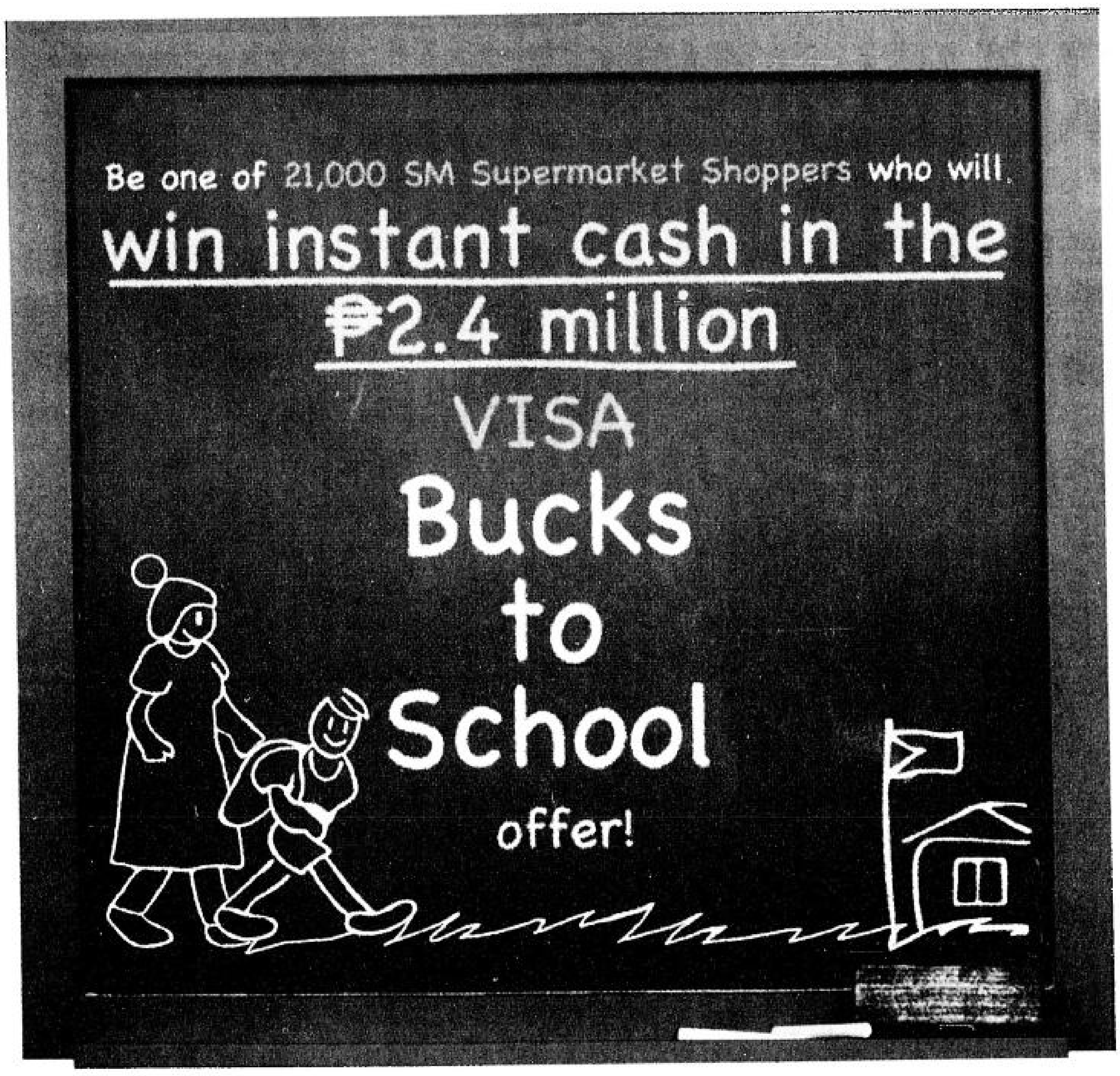
Avon gave out samples of this breakthrough product to three successful women—former Bb. Pilipinas-Universe Nina Ricci Alagao, makeup artist Gela Laurel and advertising executive Chinky Veloso. Here they share the happy results they reaped from using Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense SPF 15.

Nina Ricci Alagao shares, "In the few days that I've used Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense, I've begun noticing immediate changes. My face suddenly feels smooth, soft and supple, giving it that radiant appearance."

"As a makeup artist," says Gela Laurel, "I believe that makeup should enhance the glow of good skin rather than mask it. Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense has definitely improved my skin, making it radiate with youth and is now soft to the touch."

Chinky Veloso agrees, saying, "Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense added a soft glow to my skin, just like the way it looks after a good workout except now I can have it the whole day."

Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense SPF 15 is an oil-free, AHA-free cream, perfect for all skin types. Anew Retroactive+ Day Defense SPF 15 will be available in July through the Avon Ladies nationwide and at Avon Boutiques in Glorietta, SM Megamall, SM Southmall and SM Fairview.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- Simply proceed to the Visa redemption booth located at all SM Supermarkets nationwide and present your Visa transaction receipt for verification. The cardholder shall then be allowed to draw a scratch card from the Visa box. Simply scratch the card to determine the prize.
- Only purchases from SM Supermarkets nationwide made within the promo period (June 1 to July 15, 2005) shall be honored. Availing of the chance to win thru claiming of scratch card shall be within the promo period only. Drawing of scratch cards do not have to be on the same outlet nor the same day where purchase was made as long as it is within the promo period. All winning scratch cards shall contain an authenticated serial number approved and cleared with the Department of Trade and Industry.
- All scratch card instant prize winners may claim their prize at the Customer Service Booth of any SM Supermarket branch nationwide. To claim the prize, the cardholder must present their transaction receipt verified by the booth attendant, the winning scratch card, and their VISA Card at the Customer Service Counter. All prizes are tax-free.
- Scratch card instant prize winners have until sixty (60) days from the end of the promo period, or until September 15, 2005 to claim their prize. Prizes not claimed within the 60-day period shall be forfeited in favor of the sponsor with prior approval from DTI.

See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0430, Series of 2005.

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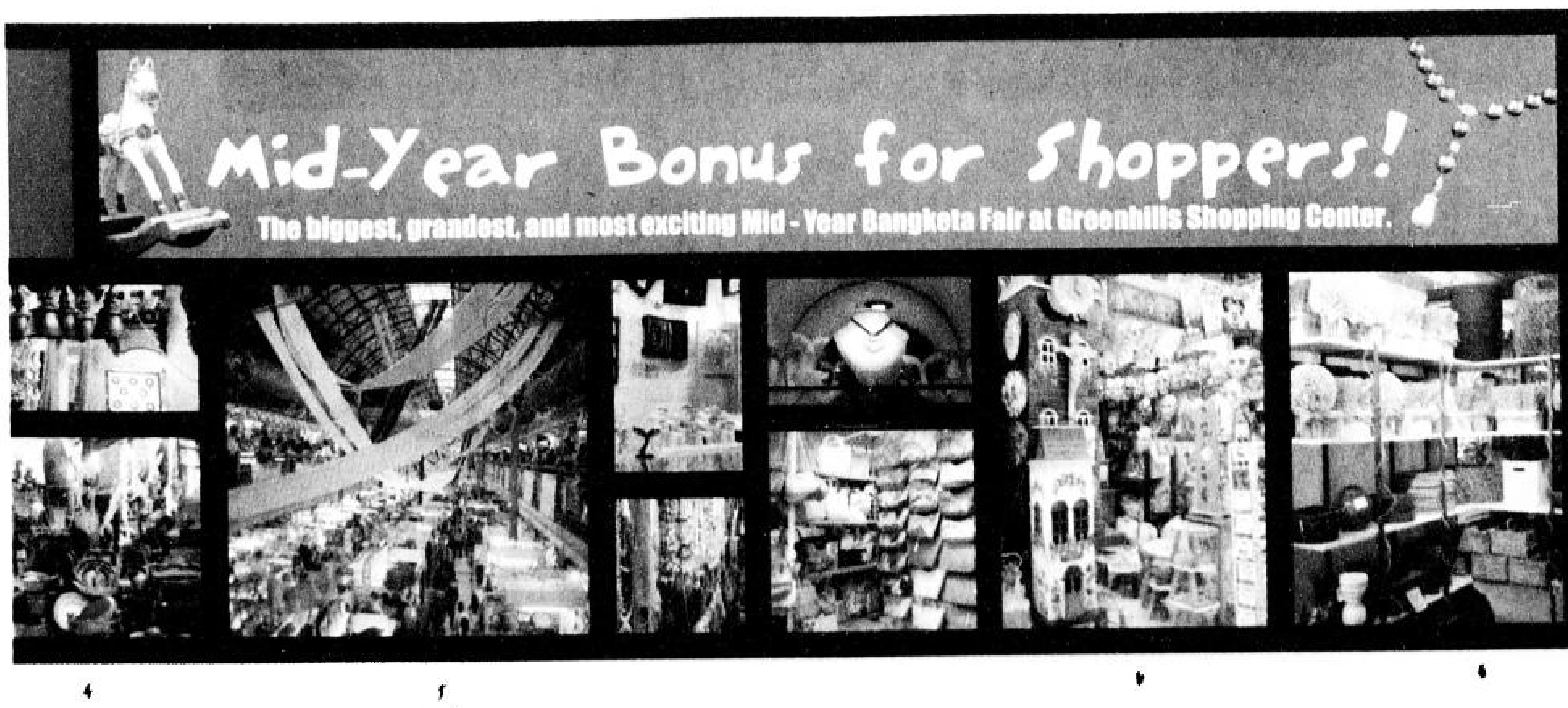
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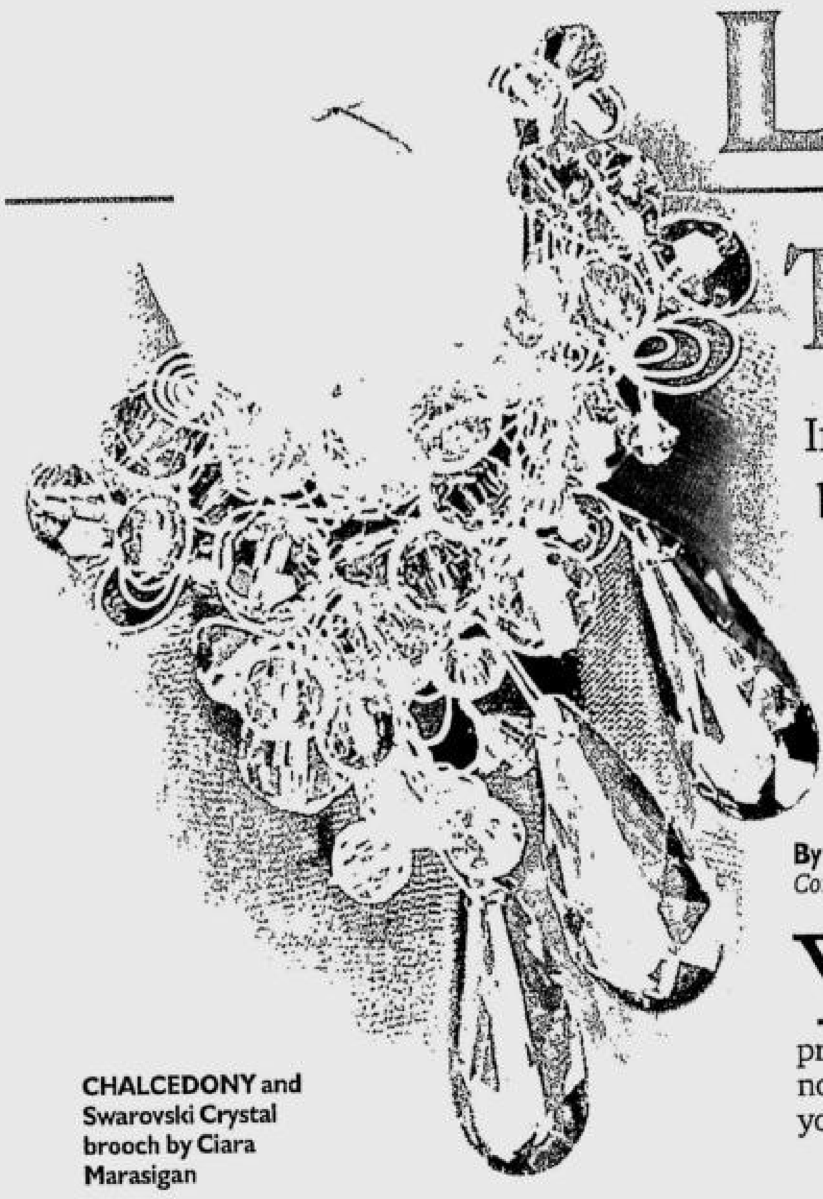

CHALCEDONY and Swarovski Crystal brooch by Ciara Marasigan

The promise of youth

In a short span of time, both Ciara Marasigan and Debbie Co have proven that loving what you do eases the path to success

By Kitty Go
Contributor

YOUTH, it is often said, is wasted on the young. But with today's breed of enterprising "young" inspired by technological and societal changes, youth not only has time, but talent

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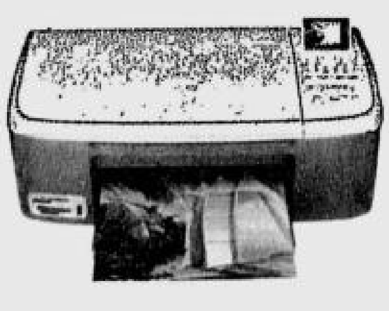

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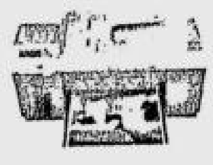

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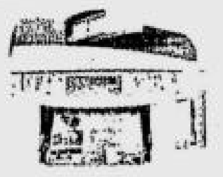

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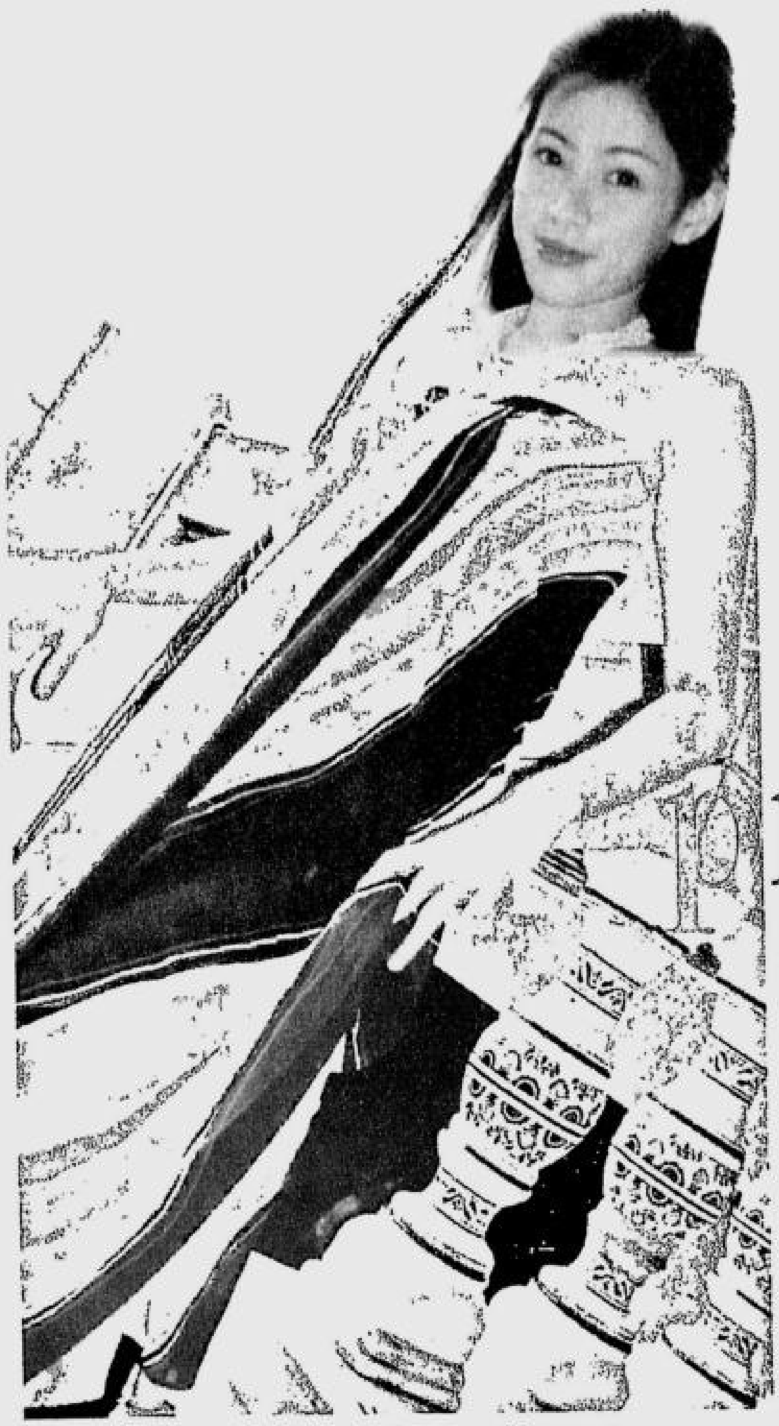
LAMCO WSI

Per DTI NCR Permit No. 3101, Series of 2005

DEBBIE Co

CIARA Marasigan

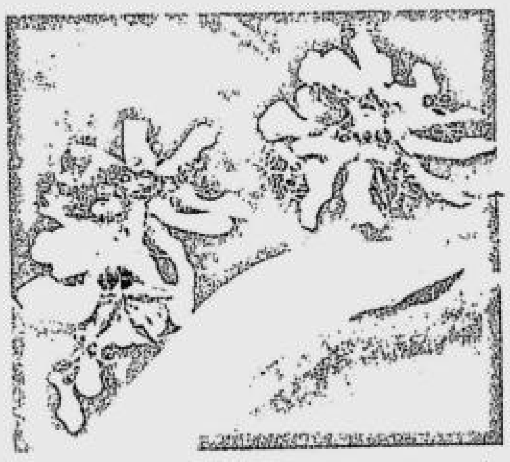
The promise of youth



CO'S collection provides a sense of grace and finesse.

CHALCEDONY, rose quartz, Swarovski crystal pendant and earrings

LAIYA by Ciara Marasigan for Swarovski's Crystallized Cosmos in Hong Kong



MOTHER-OF-PEARL and Swarovski crystal brooches

From page E1

on its side.

Witness the dotcom revolution with millions making millions, sometimes retiring, before they turn 30. "Paying dues" is not what it used to be with our reverence for celebrities known for nothing but the freshness of youth. (Yes—Paris Hilton *does* have a US$10 million business.) Every time I research fashion stories in different parts of the world, I am always drawn to so-called "young designers." Manila has no different a draw for me. Last month I got to view the lines of two very talented under-30s, namely a clothing line called After 8 by Debbie Co and an accessories line called Ciaracreates by Ciara Marasigan.

First impressions

The impression Ciaracreates (ciaracreates@gmail.com) made on me was instantaneous. At my book party in Manila, my sister-in-law gave me an oversized ring of pink, clear and pale blue stones secured by wire.

THE FLIRTY and Festive line focuses on wine hues along with flirty and feminine cuts.

HALTER tops from Ishq

PRINT- and color-driven ensembles

Great, I thought, but it would get in the way of signing books. However, I have worn the ring almost everyday since.

Also at the party was a pretty girl wearing the most over-the-top, fabulous necklace that really made an impression (of course, I saw this after Mrs. Marcos, swathed in emeralds, left). She was Ciara Marasigan, designer of the piece *and* of my new ring. She also happened to be the girlfriend of my former-foe-turned-friend, Business World columnist and lawyer, Argee Guevarra.

After 8 (debbietco@yahoo.com) came to my attention through Debbie Co's brother Dennis. I originally went to view the line at Solea thinking that she was just another kid who wanted to get into the business. She is, after all, scheduled to study at Central St. Martin's in London this summer.

Going through her rack at Solea did nothing for me either until I saw the new delivery being unpacked. Then I saw what Solea's Emi Jorge and Ishq's Candy Reyes originally saw in her line.

"The first time I saw it, I knew right away it would be sellable," relates Candy Reyes, co-owner of Ishq in Ortigas. "A lot of customers who are not so bold find After 8 to be a good line to start (orienting themselves with trendier fashion)."

Dressy but not formal

What distinguishes After 8 from most local lines is that the entire collection, as the name implies, is technically what one would wear after work. Those in creative fields like media and fashion will find outstanding pieces for everyday wear. Members of the leisure class would reach for the clothes when they get up, ready for the next party.

Debbie, a 27-year-old graduate of industrial engineering, took a fashion design course at La Salle College International before she decided to cold-call on Ishq (G/F Astoria Plaza, Escriva Drive, Ortigas 9115992,6876725) and Solea (2/F Rockwell Lifestyle 8961691).

She started After 8 simply because she was "just interested in a dressy line." Her personal faves in her collection are a lace bolero and a black cropped jacket with a ruffled front, puffed sleeves and a cutaway back reminiscent of Viktor and Rolf.

The beauty of the line lies in its practicality—great florals, paisleys and stripes come in forgiving silhouettes like caftans and unstructured jackets—where you can just throw on a top and, depending on the occasion, you are either dressed casually chic or simply dressed.

The line at Solea is more commercial with occasional design directions from the owner. Best sellers are sheer dresses to wear over jeans and self-belted cap-leeved buttonless jackets. Ishq allows Debbie total freedom and it is here that she does dressier, more expensive pieces for a more fashion-forward clientele. Where After 8 in Solea is more print and color-driven, the line at Ishq is more treatment-driven with lace, pleating and texture treatments.

It was also at Ishq that the fashion press discovered Debbie. Preview happened to be there when she was showing her line. Soon after, Mega and INQUIRER picked up on her style. Not bad for a line that has been off to a great start in less than a year.

"She's very young but she knows how to put herself out there and has a good sense of what people want to wear," observes Reyes. Come October, when Debbie plans to be back in Manila, After 8 will surely be even better than it is today.

Off to a a glittering start

Ciara Marasigan got into business because she decided to create some form of decorative centerpiece using some of her grandmother's stones. Unfortunately, the centerpiece project did not work out. Fortunately, she decided to cut up the artistic endeavor into a pendant that impressed friends and family. This is probably why she insists her products are functional art.

Three years ago, she got her first commercial project with a commission from Lane Crawford in Hong Kong. She also recently completed a delivery to Tadashi in Los Angeles, a label known for its evening wear. At my book party in Hong Kong, her brooch with a brilliant burst of color caught the eye not only of the South China Morning Post's fashion editor but also the photo editor of Time.

SOPHISTICATED and elegant, from the 27-year-old Co

Ciaracreates' individually handcrafted pieces (she never repeats styles and never knows where the stones and wires will lead her creativity) can be found at Rustan's, Solea, Ishq, Souk, e-style, Kish and the House of Laurel, where she also does custom orders to go with Rajo Laurel's famous formals.

The designer classifies herself first as an artist. But her foray into sales and exhibitions such as the one last year at the CCP and an upcoming one from Aug. 9-Sept. 8 at the Ayala Museum, betrays her talent as an artist. At 23, she is also the first jewelry designer to be admitted to the Young Designers' Guild (YDG) of the Philippines.

Ciara uses semi-precious stones, freshwater pearls and Swarovski crystals held by stainless steel wire. She will be launching Cristal Fantaisie, a line using silver and gold wire, at her Ayala Museum show. It was at the Swarovski Crystallized Cosmos booth at a Hong Kong jewelry fair that another one of her pieces caught my eye in the "Liquid Sunshine" trend section.

"Laiya," as the designer has christened the piece after a childhood beach haunt in Batangas, was an oversized neckpiece using multicolored Swarovski crystals set on a flat ivory-colored base resembling huge flower petals.

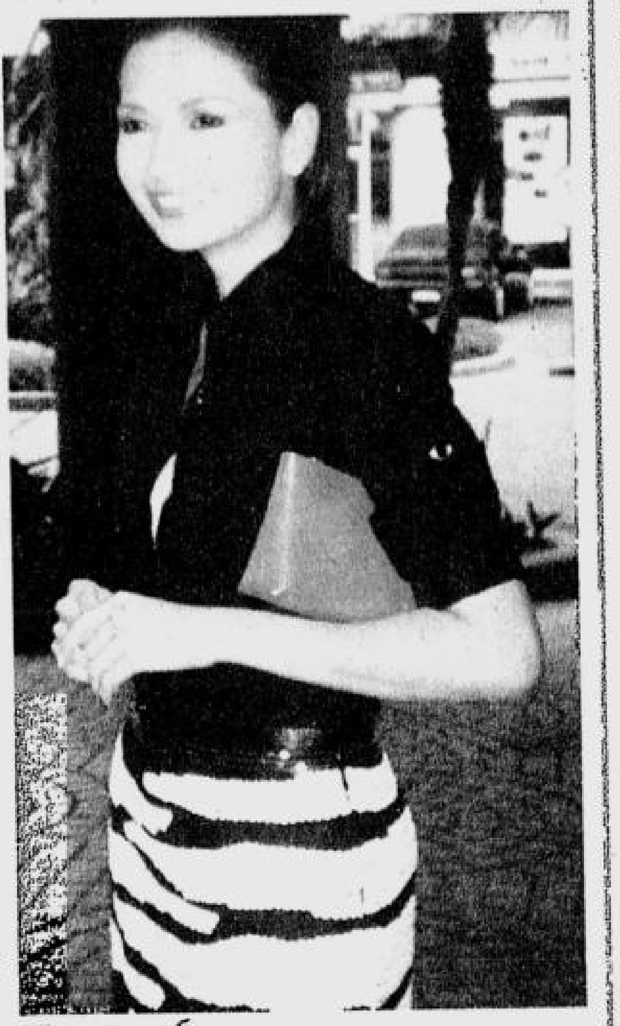
Ciaracreates is distributed in many doors because the designer clearly knows her market. With some disappointment, I asked why her commercial pieces were small compared to what I have seen and there was a dearth of rich, dark colors.

"The local market loves candy-colored stones and Filipinos generally wear smaller things because they have a smaller bone structure," she explains.

Whether large or small, her pieces stand out because they contrast the technological cut and color perfection of Swarovski crystals with the natural inconsistency of gemstones such as heat-dyed chalcedony, amethyst, quartz, *lapiz* lazuli and *marbly rhodonite*.

In a short span of time, both Ciara Marasigan and Debbie Co have proven that to love what you do eases the path to success. That, and youth. In the words of Ciara, which only someone young could utter, "I'm young and I don't have heart problems yet so I put everything into the business." Well, there are those who do get back problems...

E-mail the author at kittygo_pdi@yahoo.com.



Rissa Samson

Color! Not only can it make a simple outfit strikingly fashionable and memorable, color can speak to the soul in a thousand different ways. Color, for me, ignites my moods and emotions. As artist Georgia O'Keeffe said, "I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way—things I had no words for."

Jo Ann Bitagcol

I always accessorize a simple outfit with an interesting pair of shoes, a big watch and quirky jewelry like a braided leather bracelet with a handcuff charm. Accessorizing is the most effective way to show who you are.

Nicolette Bell

"It makes a lot of difference when an outfit is worn with confidence. Generally, people have a tendency to notice an individual's grace and comfort, rather than what she is actually wearing. For example, two people wearing the same outfit will be seen in different ways. The one who exudes an aura of confidence will look more beautiful than the other.

Raya Mananquil

I personally love to accessorize with earrings—the bigger, the better! From chandelier to hoop earrings, they're sure to spruce up any outfit, be it a tracksuit, a bikini or a little black dress.

The best thing about them, too, is that you don't have to spend too much to feel like a million bucks. I got these thick gold hoops in H&M Spain for only three Euros and the cuff for P500 at a *tiangge* in Cebu.

Accessorizing according to . . .

From page E4

abreast with the latest in fashion.

What's more, it's always a treat to watch young (or should I say "younger") models transform from inexperienced newbies to graceful, confident pros. Models are known to be the ultimate fashionistas, so it's always interesting to watch how they put together outfits and how they put a stamp of personality in whatever they are wearing.

So, in between fittings, rehearsals, having our hair and makeup down and doing the show, I took candid pictures of them and urged them to share with us the best way to accessorize a basic outfit.

Here are their sensible answers, which I hope will inspire you to express yourselves through your manner of dressing and choice of accessories.

E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com

Isabel Roces

Try using shoes, bags and accessories with colors that contrast with your outfit, preferably accessories that are bolder, shoes and bags that are more vibrant. If you're in a white tee and jeans, you can add a yellow cap or a boldly printed bag. Always remember that dressing up should be fun.

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Per DTI-NCR permit # 3731, series of 2005.

AMBUSH INTERVIEW

Accessorizing according to supermodels

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

I FOUND myself in the twilight zone last week. In an uncanny twist of events, I, a certified ex-model, ended up running around doing rehearsals and shows and a pictorial, to boot.

I was a bit hesitant to accept the projects that were offered to me, but the lure of wearing stunningly beautiful jewelry by Bulgari and then, Piaget, plus, a fabulous ball gown by designer Rhett Eala proved to be too strong. And although there are certain things that made me wonder why I ever decided to strut the catwalk again (the long waiting in between makeup and the show, for one), the benefits far outweighed the disadvantages.

It's always such a high to be around creative individuals like director Jackie Aquino and stylist Patrick Rosas, who are partly responsible for quite a number of Manila's world-class productions. Plus, it's a great way to keep

ACCESSORIZING/ E3

Bianca Valerio

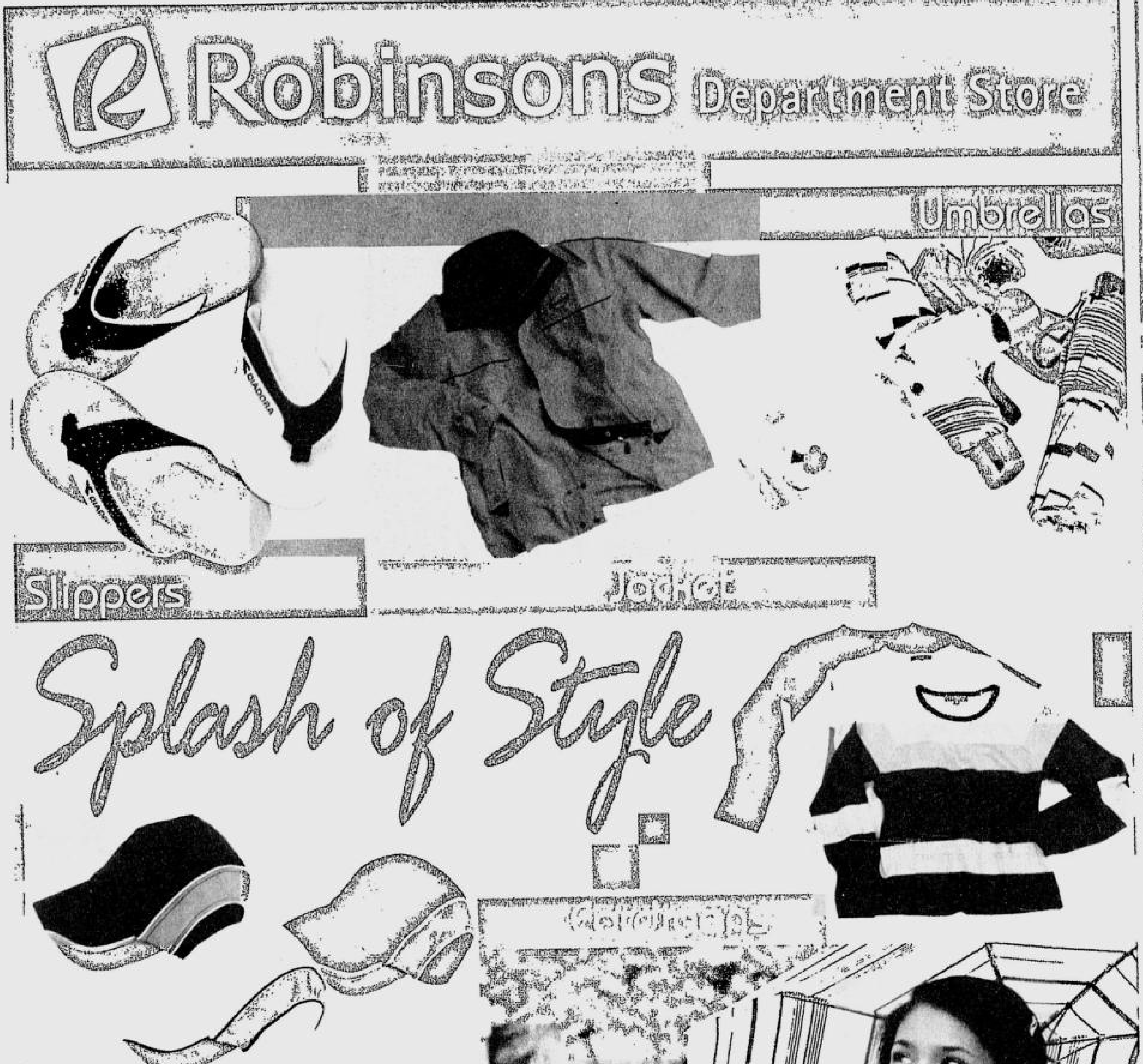
There are various ways to accessorize a basic outfit depending on the mood and/or occasion. One way would be by wearing a jacket or coat. Depending on the style and material, it can either dress up or down any ensemble.

Another way is to add a burst of color or prints through your choice of shoes, bags, belts or jewelry. It adds an element of fun and breaks the monotony.

There are much more ways but the best accessory is confidence. That's one thing that can't be mimicked nor bought. It definitely makes you stand out.

Ana Lloren

Three key points to remember: One, research and keep an eye on the latest trends. Two, experiment and be playful! Three, be confident! You have to believe in what you wear.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July 8, 2005 Today's Question:
Who edited the award-winning anthology *The Best Philippine Short Stories of the 20th Century*?
A. Isagani R. Cruz B. Cesar Ruiz Aquino C. Gilda Cordero-Fernando
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07-07-05 Answer: A
Emmanuel Fernandez wrote the award-winning book *Leaving the Priesthood.*

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